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Lessons from the British Regimental System 1868–1919: Recruiting, Retention, and Reconstitution

Benjamin F. Stork, Lieutenant Colonel, US Army

Army University Press
US Army Combined Arms Center
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Cover image: Volunteers outside a London Recruiting Office, August 1914.
Source: National Army Museum, "Volunteers outside a London Recruiting Office," 1978-11-157-22-18, August 1914, National Army Museum Study Collection, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1978-11-157-22-18.

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Program Description

The Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Art of War Scholar's program offers a small number of competitively select officers a chance to participate in intensive, graduate level seminars and in-depth personal research that focuses primarily on understanding strategy and operational art through modern military history. The purpose of the program is to produce officers with critical thinking skills and an advanced understanding of the art of warfighting. These abilities are honed by reading, researching, thinking, debating, and writing about complex issues across the full spectrum of modern warfare, from the lessons of the Russo-Japanese war through recent Global War on Terror operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, while looking ahead to the twenty-first century evolution of the art of war.

Abstract

The British Regimental System from 1868 to 1919 offers insights for recruiting a professional, globally committed US Army as it transitions between periods of small wars, peace, and large-scale conflict. The regimental system regionally aligned units, built community connections, and ensured stability for soldiers. The system's inherent stability enabled a unique combination of unit culture and community connections which bridged gaps in knowledge, trust, and identity despite a difficult recruiting environment that was in many ways like the United States faced in 2022. Despite strong labor competition, physically unhealthy recruits, and poor public perception of service, the British were able to meet global commitments, reorganize for large-scale conflict, and mobilize to win a world war. The US Army would benefit from adopting elements of this system at the division level, including home divisions, divisional recruiting teams, and more varied terms of service.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge some of the people who made this work possible. First and foremost, I could not have accomplished a fraction of this research without Kirstin Stork, my wife, editor, and inspiration. She always pushes me beyond what I thought I could achieve. Second, I want to acknowledge my committee's tireless efforts on my behalf. They encouraged me to "Go Large" and consistently offered direction and feedback which allowed me to frame, produce, and refine discourse on a topic with which I was entirely unfamiliar before embarking on this research. I would be remiss were I not to acknowledge the stellar academic environment provided by the Art of War Scholars program. The opportunity to collaborate with first-rate minds catalyzed this work into something I could never have produced alone. I would also like to specifically acknowledge Dr. Dean Nowowiejski, who encouraged me to go the extra mile to incorporate primary sources, as well as the Command and General Staff College which funded this effort. Finally, I want to acknowledge my mentors in the aerospace medicine community who in guiding my career have afforded me this opportunity for self-development, broadening, and academic inquiry. I will pay it forward.

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Illustrations

Acronyms

AFQT	Armed Forces Qualification Test
AIM	Assignment Interactive Module
BCAP	Battalion Command Assessment Program
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
BRS	British Regimental System
CCAP	Colonel's Command Assessment Program
DACES	Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey
£	British Pound
DIME	Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic
DoD	Department of Defense
DOTMLPF-P	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
Gen Z	Generation Z
LSCO	Large-Scale Combat Operations
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
OPSEC	Operations Security
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
POPREP	Population Representation Report
US	United States
WWII	World War

Chapter 1
Introduction

They are the scum of the earth and it is really wonderful that we should have made of them the fine fellows they are. With such an army we can go anywhere and do anything.

—Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, referring to his army in Spain, Portugal, and France, 1808–14

The US military is facing a recruiting crisis of proportions not seen since the post-Vietnam Era. As of the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2021–2022, the Army missed its recruiting goal by 25 percent, or more than 15,000 soldiers.[1] Other services also fell well short of their usual numbers, though they hit their targets before the fiscal year ended.[2] In response, the US Army proposed in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to cut its end strength by 12,000.[3] During testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator Thom R. Tillis described the country's current dilemma as a "war on two fronts."[4] He blamed both a decrease in eligible recruits and the lowest interest in service in the past fifteen years. Although the Army was meeting retention goals in 2022, the levels were not enough to offset the recruiting shortfall.[5] According to a 2022 Chief of Staff of the Army memo, the Army's end strength was expected to fall by 21,000 to 28,000 soldiers by the end of FY 2023.[6] If this trend continues, the Army will experience shortfalls in new recruits short term as well as second-order effects on the number of experienced officers and noncommissioned officers available to serve in the next conflict.

General James C. McConville, chief of staff of the Army, identified three key gaps prompting the shortfall in qualified US Army recruits:

- A knowledge gap; most Americans are not exposed to veterans or the military.
- An identity gap; most potential recruits do not imagine serving due to assumptions about military life and culture.
- A trust gap.[7]

Recent high-profile sexual assault cases and the fraught political climate around the military have reduced trust significantly. According to the 2021 National Defense Survey conducted by the Ronald Reagan Institute, trust in the military as an institution fell from 70 percent in 2018 to 45 percent in 2021.[8]

The FY 2023 NDAA required no less than nine studies on recruitment across the Department of Defense (DoD).[9] Similarly, the 2022 National Security Strategy re-affirmed commitment to the all-volunteer force and prioritized people within that force as the most important investment in the US military.[10] Both the 2018 National Defense Strategy and National Military Strategy emphasized the importance of cultivating a talented workforce. The 2018 National Defense Strategy focused on cultivating workforce talent through rigorous professional education and talent management.[11] Similarly, the 2019 National Military Strategy identified people as the primary source of competitive advantage.[12] Finally, recent testimony in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee indicated that America's civilian leaders take the recruiting crisis very seriously.[13] The numbers, however, are grim. Only 23 percent of Americans aged 17 to 24 are qualified to serve without waiver. Additionally, a 2022 DoD memo indicated only 9 percent of eligible Americans had considered service, the lowest propensity to serve since 2007.[14] This crisis requires a multifactorial solution.

A broad re-familiarization of American citizenry with military life will be needed to support efforts to improve recruitment and retention. Without a true paradigmatic shift, the US military will forever be chasing a diminishing pool of talent. A historic example which may offer some insights was Britain's recruiting crisis between the Crimean War and the onset of World War I, as well as the country's interwar recruiting difficulties following World War I itself. Britain also experienced mounting concern regarding the performance of a small professional force in large-scale combat. The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) as it fought in the first year of World War I may provide an instructive example. These concerns however, do not exist apart from the society from which an army draws its soldiers.

Throughout the period under study there was complex interplay between changing social and political forces and Britain's military leadership. This social and political milieu is not dissimilar from the environment currently facing the United States. The era was marked by issues of social class, education, economic concerns, shifting social mores, and legitimate concerns about the British Army's role in peace and war. Through it all, however, the regiment remained a constant force in recruiting and retaining soldiers, and forming a nucleus to reconstitute units decimated by large-scale combat operations. Distinctive cultures developed which continue to foster esprit de corps in the modern British Army. This period

of drastic social, political, technological, and military upheavals may provide insights or at least prompt the right questions about the US Army's own tumultuous time.

Knowledge, Identity, Trust

US Army efforts in recent years have failed to meet recruitment goals for the current NDAA. The 2023 NDAA proposes to lower Army end strength in part due to a lack of qualified recruits to fill current requirements. Army senior leadership attributes the shortfall to gaps in knowledge, identity, and trust.[15] Potential recruits do not know about the Army, cannot imagine themselves serving, and do not trust the institution. In congressional testimony, this shortfall was also attributed to a shrinking pool of recruits who are physically and legally eligible to serve.[16] The United States is also experiencing unprecedented competition for labor as unemployment has dropped precipitously since 2020.[17] Simultaneously, 2022 data suggests the COVID-19 pandemic reduced recruitment, coupled with more than 8,000 soldiers who were discharged for vaccine refusal.[18] To mitigate this crisis, the US Army needs to evaluate the needs of current soldiers and motivations of Generation Z recruits, while working to expand its recruiting pool. The British Regimental System (BRS) case study examines an army adapting to changing labor, social, and military conditions while remaining a globally committed force.

Regimental Recruiting: Transformation in Contact

This book examines the BRS 1868–1919 through the lens of the current US Army recruiting crisis. It compares the culture and recruiting practices of two powerful, global militaries as they navigate long periods of peace punctuated by limited war and eventual large-scale combat. This case study will consider how the BRS affected recruitment, retention, and reconstitution and identify lessons applicable to US forces today. It will address questions like these:

- How can the US Army apply lessons from the British Regimental System 1868–1919 to recruit and retain qualified soldiers to meet NDAA manning levels?
- What is the current recruiting environment in which the US Army operates?
- What shortfalls did the British Regimental System 1868–1919 address?

- What effect did Cardwell-Childers, Haldane, and other 1868–1919 reforms have on British Army recruiting, retention, and reconstitution?
- How could lessons from British Army reforms be applied to US Army policy?

Questioning Assumptions: Can the Nineteenth Century Inform the Twenty-First?

Some broad assumptions apply within the framework of this book and bear consideration here. The first is that there "is" a long-term recruiting crisis requiring some substantial changes. The evidence presented here compellingly highlights the current shortfall. Additional data identifies some long-term trends that illustrate a longer-term demographic underpinning to this crisis. That said, some such as international relations scholar Kori Shacke doubt the US Army has more than a transient fluctuation in recruiting numbers.[19] Shacke notes that recruiting issues are partly related to the politicization of the military and partly of the military's own making through excessively stringent physical entry standards. She describes an ongoing back-and-forth discussion with General James Mattis on the topic of physical fitness as a necessity for recruits. Interestingly, the British Army wrestled with similar constraints imposed by its own demographics which lend some credence to her argument.

It is also worth mentioning that an army operates within constraints set by civilian policy. The British Empire had real economic stakes in preserving colonies abroad using its army as it benefitted directly both through resource extraction and mercantilist policies. The United States receives no such direct benefits and could arguably maintain neo-colonial benefits gained from dominating cultural and banking spheres without large-scale army intervention abroad. A civilian policy of reduced intervention, therefore, might require a smaller army. In that case, there would indeed be no recruiting crisis to speak of.

A second assumption is that British regimental culture can be adapted successfully to the US Army. While the United States maintains close cultural ties with Britain and George Washington modeled the nascent US Army on the British model, much US Army doctrine stems from French roots.[20] The first wave of professionalization in the US Army was prompted by leaders who wanted to understand the military revolution and attendant revolutions in military affairs that drove Napoleonic success. In 1824, US military educator Sylvanus Thayer and his student, military theorist Dennis

Hart Mahan, undertook a program to professionalize US military education with a four-year trip to observe the French Army.[21] Mahan's study of the French way of war and that of Swiss military writer Antoine-Henri Jomini, in particular, were later passed on to his student, US Army officer and scholar Henry Wager Halleck. His *Elements of Military Art and Science* laid the foundation for American military literature.[22]

This is not to say the US Army does not share a rich cultural heritage and high level of association with the British Army. As this book will examine in a later chapter, there are some analogous features (e.g., museums, clubs, and associations) between US Army institutional culture and British regimental culture. These features appear at different levels in the US military's force structure and are most often found at the divisional or installation level. By selectively adapting BRS aspects, the US Army is much more likely to meet with success than through rote emulation.

A third assumption is that the US Army would readily accept a cultural shift prescribed in a top-down manner. There are multiple examples of this concept, as the Army has been a test bed for several centrally mandated cultural shifts. The first in the modern Army was the integration of all armed forces ordered by President Harry S. Truman in 1948.[23] Executive Order 9981 was fully implemented by the Army in 1954.[24] Despite full implementation, however, racial strife remained prevalent across the military at large until attitudes began to shift in society as a whole. Several high-profile incidents such as the Kitty Hawk riots and general baseline racial unrest continued to pervade military service.[25] For instance, the Marine Corps alone reported 1,060 incidents of racially motivated violence in Vietnam in 1970.[26] Despite these tensions, and the top-down nature of the shift, the US Army continually outpaced society at large in improved race relations and continues to be one of the most diverse organizations in the United States.[27]

A second case can be found in sequential cultural shifts on homosexuality—from prohibition, to tacit acceptance, to eventual open acceptance with the 2010 repeal of the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy.[28] These shifts were top-down in nature, though the repeal was preceded by extensive data gathering across services to evaluate support for the change.[29] The military culture lagged society slightly; in 2010, 27 percent of Americans opposed homosexuals serving openly while 29 percent of military members opposed it, mostly in the Marine Corps.[30] This relative alignment of values made the top-down policy shift palatable to most service-members; the majority (52 percent) were ambivalent or indifferent to the change.

The US military likely would be receptive to a top-down change that provided them with resources to build and sustain unit culture. A regimental style system, complete with mess and museum as well as more stability and predictability, would provide quality-of-life improvements rather than directives from on high. Fewer Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves would provide stability, promote friendships and *esprit de corps*, and foster development of a distinct unit culture. Stability also would help attract recruits and keep them after their first contracts are up. This study will review literature on how stability and culture align with Gen Z preferences in the workforce as part of the review of current recruiting and labor environments.

A final concern is that scholarly work evaluating recruitment and retention often assesses both topics in a combined fashion without giving robust attention to each. This book will help disentangle these two concepts and their attendant motivators. Accounting for those separate streams will require an ecosystem or lifestyle approach which eschews assumptions of stable motivators throughout a soldier's career. Soldiers, like civilian workers, have different motivations for joining and staying in the military at different points in their life and career. A related assumption is that broad categorization of rank-and-file preferences will apply equally to Army professions (e.g., engineer, medical, legal, cyber, and Special Forces). Some aspects of those niche careers likely will not follow the same preference patterns as for most soldiers. This study however, will address recruiting in general, rather than more niche career fields. Further, it will be limited to a single culturally and militarily similar ally, Britain, during an era in which Britain was a global superpower, the years 1868 to 1919.

Summary

The US Army faces an existential crisis in recruiting. Leaders at the highest civilian and military levels have realized that the status quo will no longer sustain an army of the size needed to support current national security policy. Even with recently reduced end strength, Army leadership needs to recruit and retain the most capable soldiers. The Army routinely examines the recruiting environment but has not yet accepted the underlying premise that "how" soldiers serve can create cultures that are a force multiplier for recruiting, retention, and unit effectiveness. The British Regimental System as it existed 1868 to 1919 offers a case study in military organizational culture, offering insights into creating and sustaining unit culture as an independent factor in the moral force of the soldier.

Notes

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Chapter 2
Literature Review: Trends in Recruiting and Retention

Generation Z, born 1997 and later, is the US military's primary recruiting target.[1] By 2045, these recruits will begin entering the General Officer Corps and Senior Enlisted Corps.[2] Since these individuals began entering the workforce, researchers have developed significant assessments of what this generation wants from a career. According to a 2018 study of 3,388 workers aged 18 to 23, the top three motivators for choosing a career were stable career path, competitive salary (benefits), and work-life balance respectively. While it may seem that the Army addresses these three goals, its system of regular permanent change of station (PCS) may compromise stability and work-life balance.[3] In surveys, Gen Z West Point cadets described themselves as fragile, depressed, and unfocused.[4] Addressing such attitudes in perhaps the least helpful way, a 2022 military health system press release decried the evils of the "Nintendo Generation" as poor fodder for boot camp.[5] Approaching this issue more realistically, the US Army is competing for talent in the tightest labor market in the past twenty years. Gen Z lived through the great recession as children and entered the workforce during the COVID Pandemic. Rather than ascribe weakness to Gen Z, the military needs to look for ways to attract this generation by acknowledging their interests, offering them agency, leading with authenticity, and building them into the soldiers that America will need for the future fight.

General James C. McConville, chief of staff of the Army, noted that the US military is currently chasing an increasingly smaller slice of the nation's population.[6] To understand why that is the case, and how the labor market influences recruiting trends, it is essential to understand the demographics of the Army and potential recruits and how recruitment is closely linked to unemployment. US unemployment remains historically low—3.5 percent in 2022, similar to FY 2019.[7] The labor market will also prove an important factor in the case study.

The FY 2019 Department of Defense Population Representation Report (POPREP) as well as the FY 2020 Demographics Profile Report characterize recent demographics of the US force.[8] The POPREP identifies Gen Z as the US Army's primary recruiting target, showing that accessions are demographically quite young; Active Component enlisted accessions under the age of 24 make up 37 percent of total annual accessions (see Figure 2.1 on the next page). Even for officers, this number is still significant

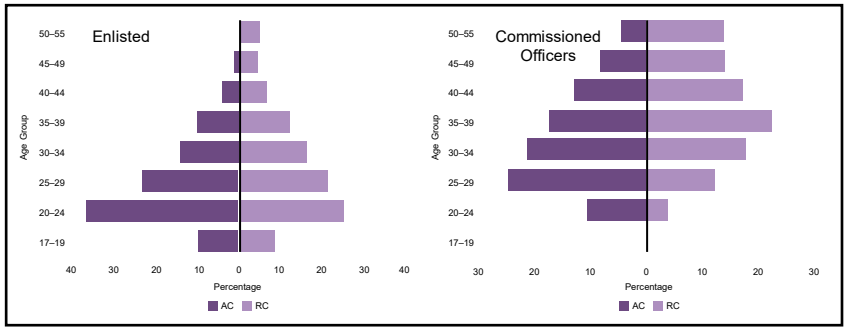
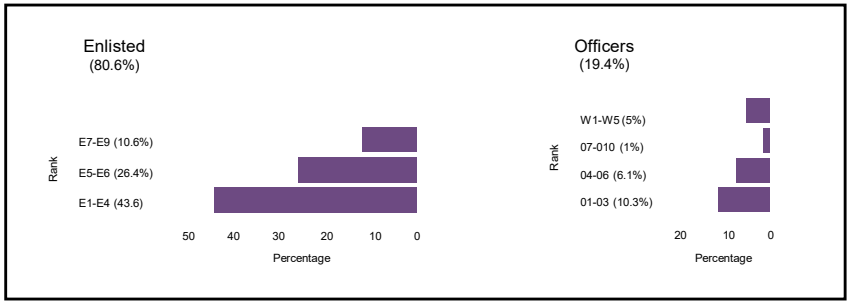


Figure 2.1. Department of Defense Active Component and Reserve Component Age Distributions, Enlisted and Officers, FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 50.

at 10 percent.[9] The oldest Gen Z members are currently 23 and the younger members of this generation will be coming of age to serve over the next decade. The demographics profile in Figure 2.2 expands on this age distribution, showing that fully 54.2 percent of active-duty Army personnel are junior enlisted or junior officers.[10]

Army enlisted accessions, evaluated according to race and ethnicity, are very close to civilian benchmarks. Indeed, the US Army exceeds civilian recruitment benchmarks when it comes to women of color. Civilian non-college degree holders who are non-white comprise only 25



Data From: US Department of Defense, "2020 Demographics Profile" (Report, Military OneSource), accessed 24 October 2022, https://www.militaryonesource.mil/data-research-and-statistics/military-community-demographics/2020-demographics-profile.

Figure 2.2. Rank Demographics of Active Duty Soldiers.

Source: Created by Army University Press.

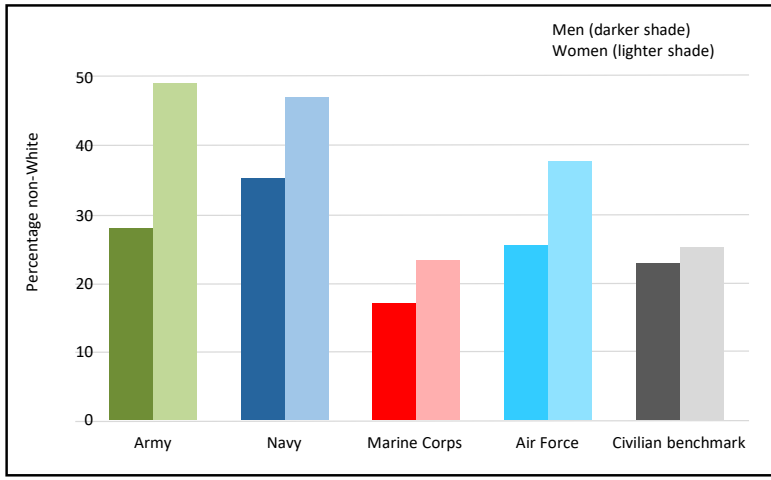
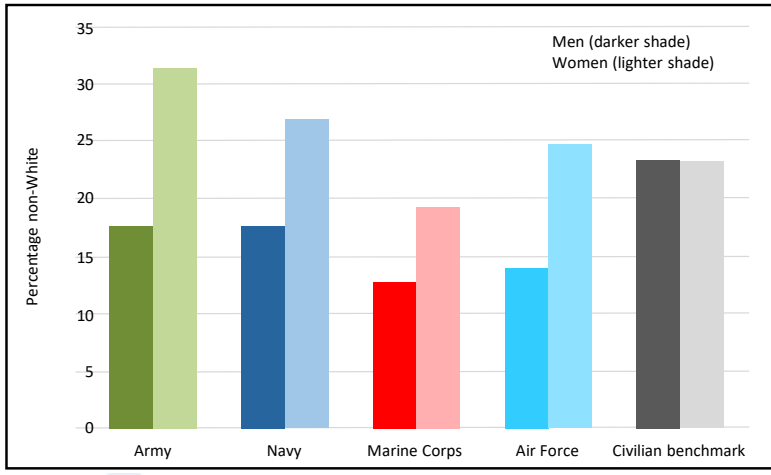


Figure 2.3. Percentage of Non-White Active Component Enlisted Members, by Gender and Service, FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 27.



Note: The civilian benchmark is the 21-to-49-year-old college graduate labor force. Those of unknown race are distributed as knowns.

Figure 2.4. Percentage of Non-Whites in the Active Component Commissioned Officer Corps, by Gender and Service, FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 37.

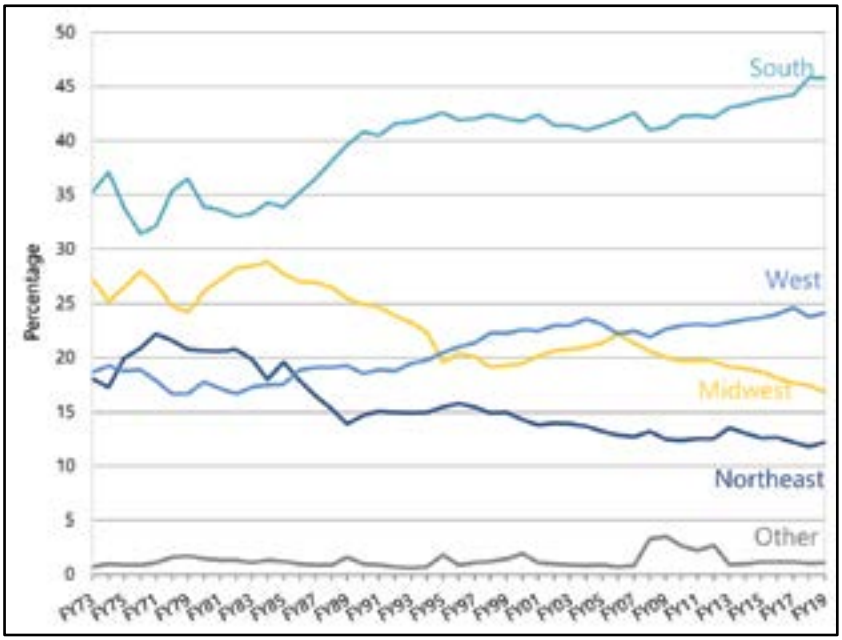


Figure 2.5. Geographic Distribution of Enlisted Active Component Accessions, FY 1973 through FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 16.

percent of the female workforce, while Army accessions among the same group are at nearly 50 percent.[11]

The officer corps shows the same propensity to exceed civilian benchmarks in female non-white college degree holders but also indicates the Army is not reaching its male counterparts. Male non-white college degree holders make up 23 percent of the civilian workforce but comprise only 17 percent of Army accessions.

Perhaps the most interesting POPREP finding is the geographic and quality indicators of incoming recruits aged 18 to 24. Since the beginning of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, gradually increasing proportions of active-duty accessions have come from the South, steady levels from Western states, gradually declining accessions from the northeast, and pre-

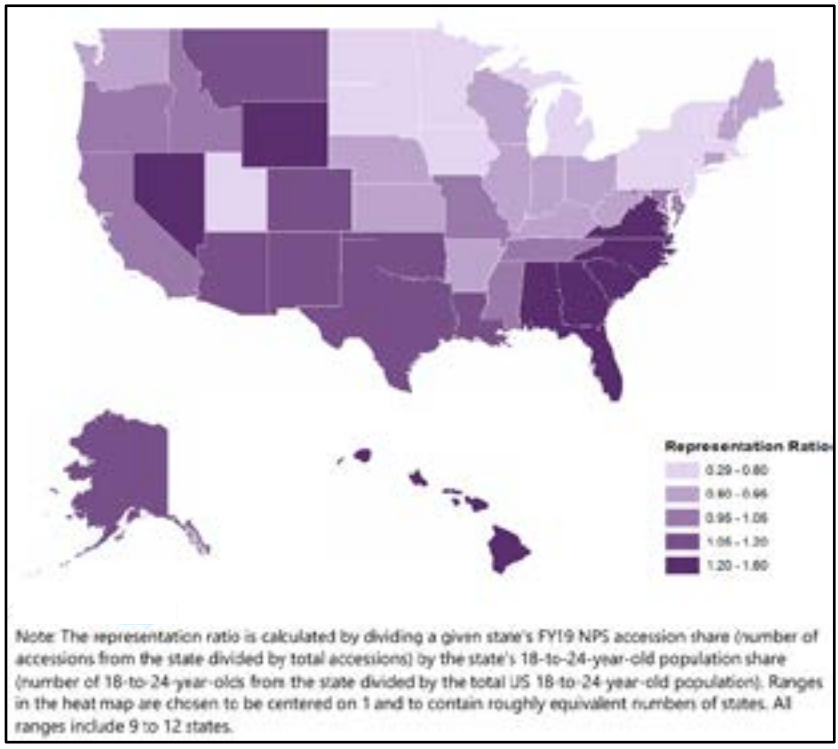


Figure 2.6. Enlisted Accession Representation Ratio, by State, FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 18.

cipitously declining recruitment from the Midwest. This information is Department of Defense (DoD) wide and not Army specific.

Figure 2.6 above presents another way of viewing accessions. It shows the percentage of 18 to 24 age demographic successfully recruited in each state. This "representation ratio" visually illustrates which states recruit most successfully per capita in the target age group.

Interestingly, Figure 2.7 on the next page shows a significant overlap between the most highly represented recruiting areas and states with adolescent obesity.[12]

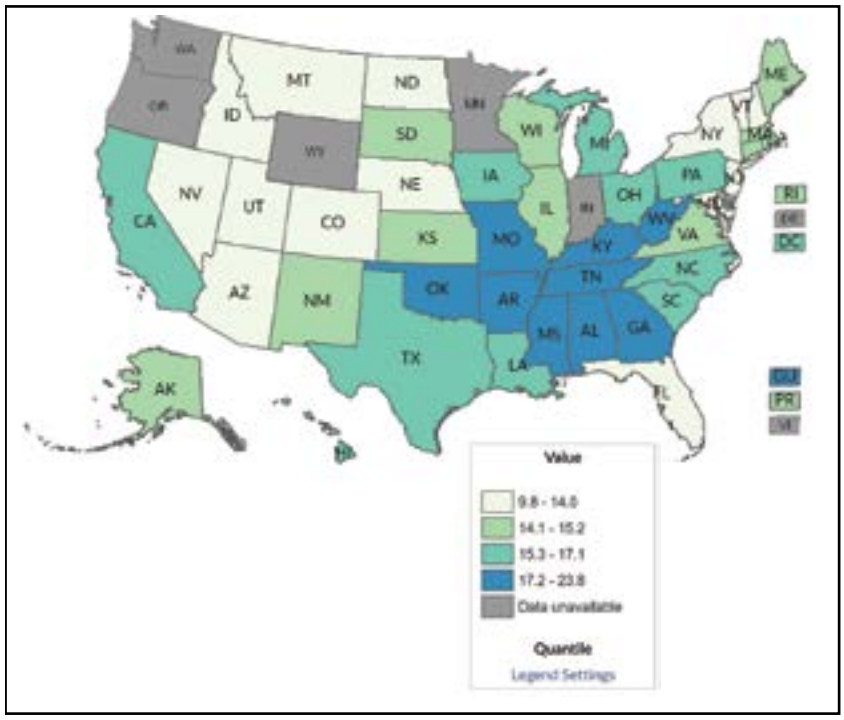


Figure 2.7. Percentage of Students in Grades 9 through 12 Who Are Obese.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "Explore by Topic," Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity Data (CDC 2019), accessed 6 April 2023, https://nccd.cdc.gov/dnpao_dtm/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=DNPAO_DTM.ExploreByTopic&islClass=OWS&islTopic=&go=GO.

Next, the POPREP examines recruit quality geographically. DoD sets quality benchmarks for the aptitude and educational credentials of enlisted recruits.[13] The Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), a nationally normed aptitude test of math and verbal skills, is used to predict training success and on-the-job performance. The DoD benchmark is to have 60 percent of accessions score at the 50th percentile or higher on the AFQT. In FY 2019, 69 percent of Active Component accessions scored at or above the 50th percentile. Recruits who have both Tier 1 education credentials (high school diploma) and AFQT scores in the top 50 percentiles

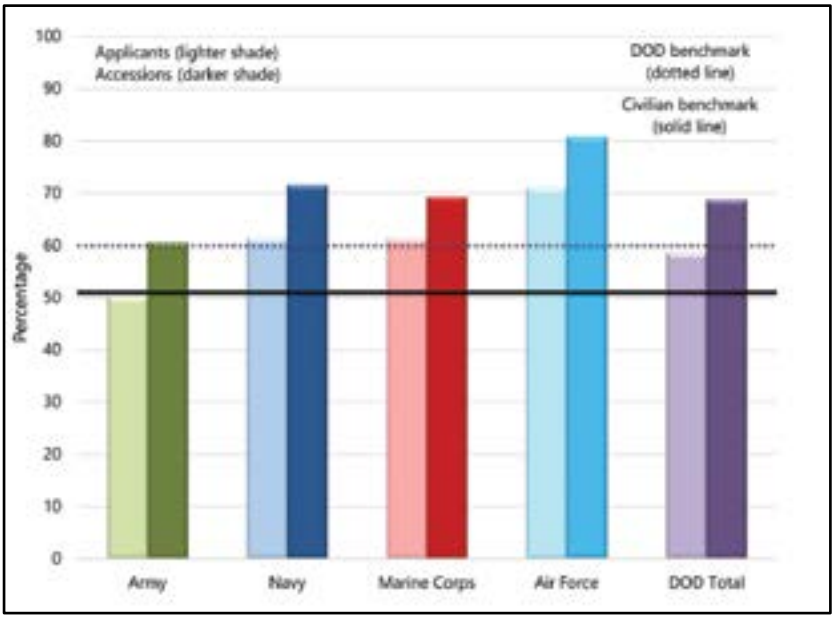


Figure 2.8. Percentage of Active Component Enlisted Applicants and Accessions Scoring at or above 50th Percentile on the AFQT by Service, FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 14.

are classified as high quality. The Army falls significantly below other services in quality of accessions, with only 60 percent of accessions regarded as high quality compared to the DoD total of 70 percent.

Interestingly, when evaluated geographically regarding quality, the pattern is the inverse of the representation ratio. In states where recruits make up a small proportion of the total 18 to 24 population, the Army is recruiting the best candidates. In highly represented states, however, recruit quality is lower. This suggests that the US Army may be over-recruiting in these areas, while missing highly qualified recruits in less-represented areas (Figure 2.9 on the next page). This is concerning in light of an overall

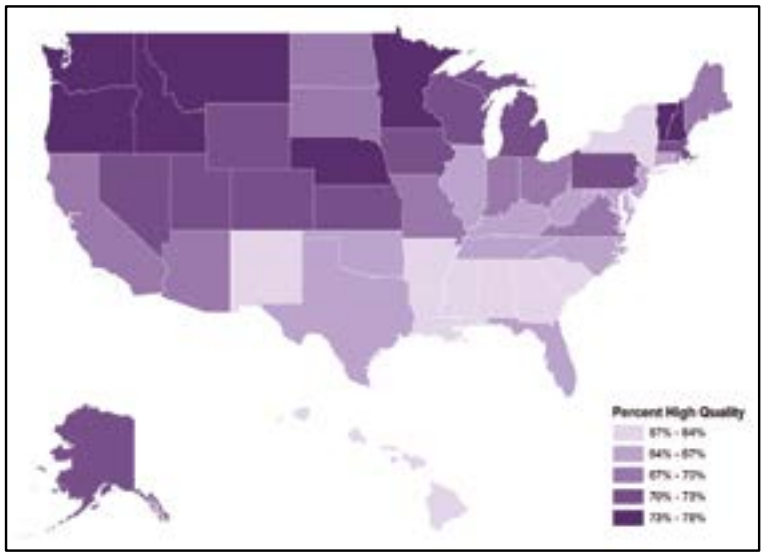


Figure 2.9. Percentage of High-Quality Active Component Enlisted Accessions by State, FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 20.

POPREP trend that the percentage of high-quality recruits has declined since FY 2011 (Figure 2.10).

Army senior leaders link the shortfall in qualified recruits to three key gaps. First is a knowledge gap; most Americans are not exposed to veterans or the military. This is borne out by an Army-conducted canvas of 3,000 adults aged 18 to 76 evaluating their knowledge and perceptions of the Army.[14] Seventy-three percent of Gen Z respondents claimed to have some familiarity with the Army. When questioned further, however, few understood retirement, education, and home buying benefits related to military service, and 30 percent believed that all Army jobs were combat-related. Similarly, regarding perceptions of the day-to-day experience of Army life, Gen Z respondents were the least likely to think soldiers have work-life balance.[15] In response, the Army has worked to engage the public through its "Know Your Army" Campaign, short recruiting spots intended to highlight the benefits. These clips, which feature soldiers comparing benefits with civilian friends and colleagues (often unsympathetically), have been met with a mixed reception.[16] The US Army's "March

Figure 2.10. Percentage of High-Quality Active Component Enlisted Accessions by Service, FY 1973 through FY 2019.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/, 15.

to Service" campaign, on the other hand, uses comments from community partners, influencers, and veterans to help reconnect the Army with the American people.[17]

Ultimately, the Army needs to broaden awareness of service benefits among its pool of applicants. This will be hindered by an identity gap which may be more difficult to surmount than the knowledge gap. Of Americans currently eligible to serve, only 9 percent have seriously considered service.[18] Meanwhile, 46 percent of Americans aged 18 to 29 surveyed by the Reagan Institute were "not willing at all" or "not very willing" to serve.[19] These potential recruits cannot visualize themselves serving due to assumptions about military life and culture. While knowledge may improve the situation, influencers like parents and community members likely would have a greater effect on this gap. These trusted advisors in a young person's life are key to their decision-making.

The concept of trusted advisors is important because, as General McConville notes, the Army also has a trust gap.[20] In a 2022 poll gauging mil-

itary trust, the top three broad categories for this gap were (1) the politicization of the military, (2) concerns about leader performance, and (3) the military's ability to win wars.[21] Similar concerns were raised in this book's case study regarding the effectiveness of the British Army and its relationship to the people. The British sought to improve recruiting through community engagement as well as advertising, and by working to make soldiers and the Army itself more effective, professional, and worthy of trust.

Current State of Retention

Just as important as recruiting is retention. The latest available data is in the FY 2016 POPREP and the inaugural 2021 Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey (DACES). The retention rate shows predictable gates at the end of two-, three-, four-, and six-year contracts, as well as diminishing separations approaching retirement (Figure 2.11 below).[22] Notably, the separation rate at six years is roughly 60 percent of separation at four years, suggesting a buy-in effect introduced by longer contracts. The report does not record this information for officers. The most recent

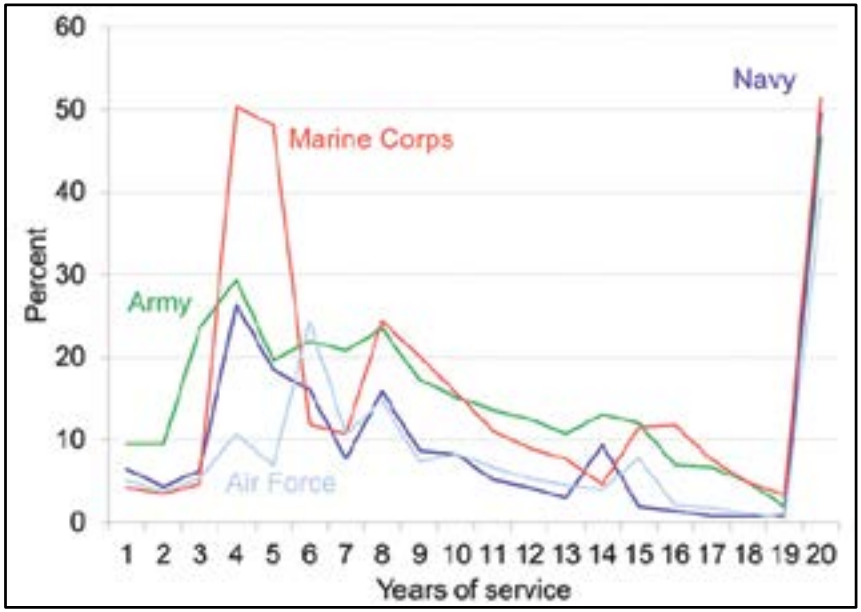


Figure 2.11. Average Active Component Enlisted Separation Rates by Service, FY 2016.

Source: Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2016," accessed 18 October 2022, https://prhome.defense.gov/M-RA/Inside-M-RA/MPP/Reports/.

data which calculates average lengths of service for officers and enlisted is in the FY 2009 POPREP, which indicates officers served 11 years on average and enlisted service averaged 6.7 years.[23]

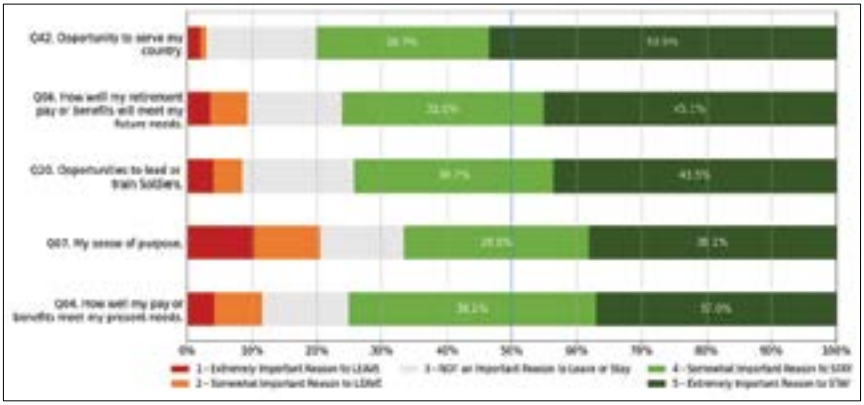
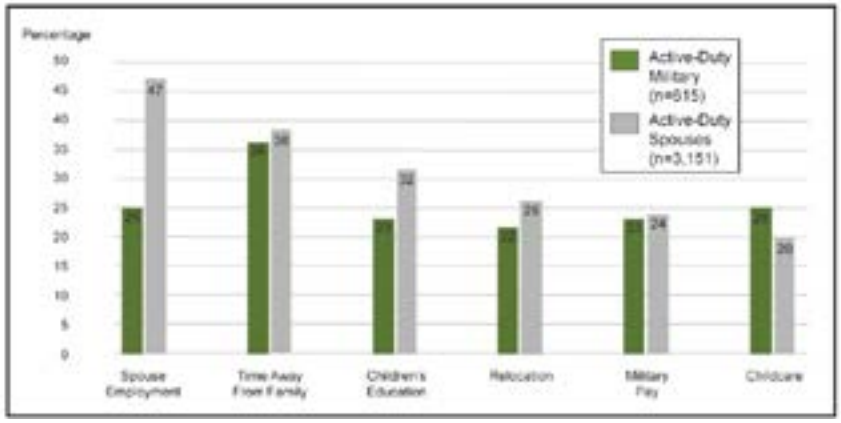


Figure 2.12. Top 5 "Extremely Important" Reasons to STAY in the Army.

Source: Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, Department of the Army and People Analytics, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, "Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey First Annual Report" (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, June 2021), 28.



Data From: Blue Star Families, "2021 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Comprehensive Report," Blue Star Families.

Figure 2.13. Institutional and Occupational Motivations for Joining the Army.

Source: Created by Army University Press.

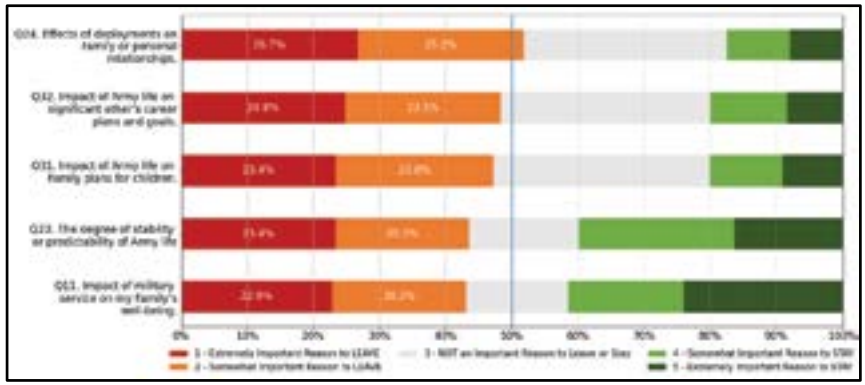


Figure 2.14. Top 5 "Extremely Important" Reasons to LEAVE the Army.

Source: Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, Department of the Army and People Analytics, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, "Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey First Annual Report" (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, June 2021), 21.

Beyond the demographics, the 2021 DACES survey identifies some reasons why soldiers continue to serve as well as top reasons why they separate. Their reasons to stay fall into two categories: service orientation and benefits (Figure 2.12 on the previous page). Soldiers are generally happy with their present benefits and future prospects and express a desire to serve purposefully, leading others. A 2018 RAND Study, however, shows intrinsic motivations may, in fact, co-exist with extrinsic (occupational) and vary in strength as motivators for initial recruitment, versus retention over a soldier's career.[24]

Conversely, soldiers report the reasons they leave the service are primarily related to predictability, stability, and family life (see Figure 2.14 above). Soldiers are concerned about the effect of deployments on their families, and the Army's effect on their spouse's career prospects. Also noted were concerns about their children's education due to unpredictable school modalities.[25]

These concerns are not surprising as deployments often stress families with limited social networks and because military spouses are increasingly engaged with the workforce.[26] Addressing the career prospect concern, society at large has evolved in the past fifty years. According to a 2019 US Census Bureau Report, the number of dual-income families increased from 25 percent to 60 percent between 1960 and 2000.[27] The military has experienced similar trends, with 79 percent of military spouses employed

at least part-time in the civilian workforce.[28] These concerns are echoed in the 2021 Military Family Lifestyle Survey, which found that spouse underemployment or unemployment remained a top issue for respondents; spouse unemployment rates were four to six times the national average.[29]

Interestingly, the DACES report also used an open-ended question methodology, asking soldiers to indicate their most important reasons for staying in the Army. This gives some broader insights into what might be on the mind of currently serving soldiers. While these reasons by and large followed the above, they were somewhat contradictory when considering the often-stated reasons for leaving. Stability and family, for instance, are major reasons for staying in the Army and also major reasons for considering leaving. This raises the question of whether less stable soldiers, and consequently their families, are more affected by the vicissitudes of Army life. Clearly stability and effects on family are important determinants of retention (Figures 2.15 below and 2.16 on the next page).

The importance of retention as a buffer during poor recruiting times is well characterized. Retaining soldiers also prevents institutional churn and allows service members to develop skills rather than training new personnel for the same job every few years. What might be overlooked, how-

Figure 2.15. Word Cloud: Factors with the Largest Impact on Staying in the Army.

Source: Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, Department of the Army and People Analytics, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, "Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey First Annual Report" (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, June 2021), 37, accessed 9 June 2022.

Figure 2.16. Word Cloud: Factors that Most Influenced (or Will Most Influence) Timing of Departure from the Army.

Source: Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, Department of the Army and People Analytics, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, "Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey First Annual Report" (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, June 2021), 37.

ever, is the direct impact of retention, specifically satisfied retention, on recruiting. According to the Military Family Lifestyle Report, 70 percent of serving soldiers are satisfied with their jobs. Among the 30 percent who are not satisfied, however, seven in ten were actively seeking other jobs.[30] While those under contract are unlikely to act on this dissatisfaction immediately, dissatisfied soldiers leaving service directly impact recruiting by being less likely to recommend service to young persons.[31]

Demographics of the Current United States Labor Market

To help understand US Army recruiting and retention, perhaps the most defining factor of current US labor as a whole is fierce competition for workers in one of the tightest employment markets in the past twenty years. In 2022, the civilian unemployment rate was 3.5 percent, tied with late 2019 for the most competitive labor market in the past twenty years (Figure 2.17).[32] Even as employers compete for talent, the pool of job seekers continues to dwindle due to retirement. A 2019 RAND Study showed that recruit quality and ability vary directly with unemployment (Figure 2.18). Interestingly, this variance appears inelastic during periods when there is a high perception that bodily harm may result from serving (post-Vietnam Era and surges in Iraq and Afghanistan).[33]

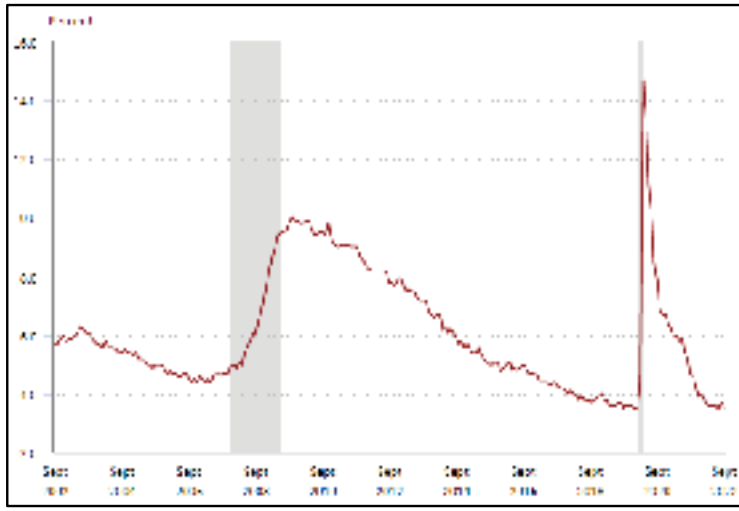
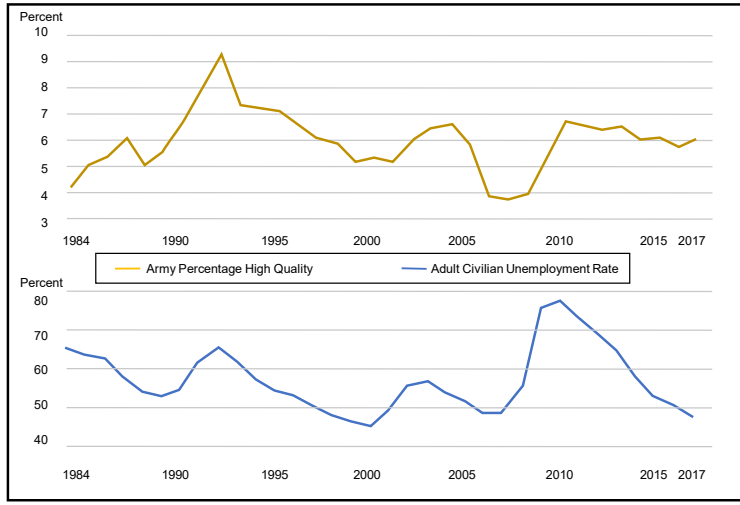


Figure 2.17. Civilian Unemployment Rate, Seasonally Adjusted, 2002 to 2022.

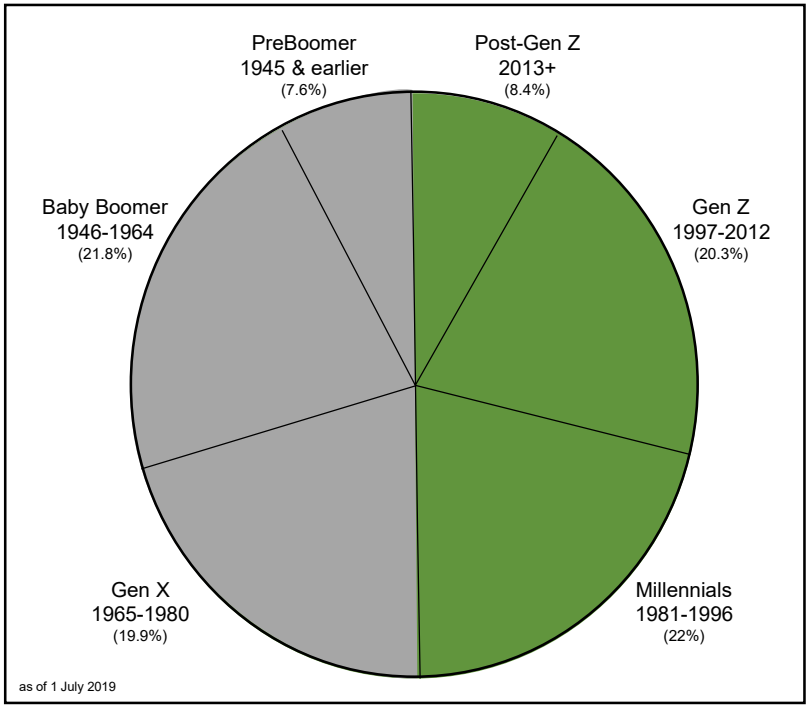
Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics, "Civilian Unemployment Rate," Bureau of Labor and Statistics, accessed 31 October 2022, https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/civilian-unemployment-rate.htm.



Data From: Beth J. Asch, *Navigating Current and Emerging Army Recruiting Challenges* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019), 5.

Figure 2.18. High Quality Army Enlisted Accessions and Adult Unemployment Rate.

Source: Created by Army University Press.



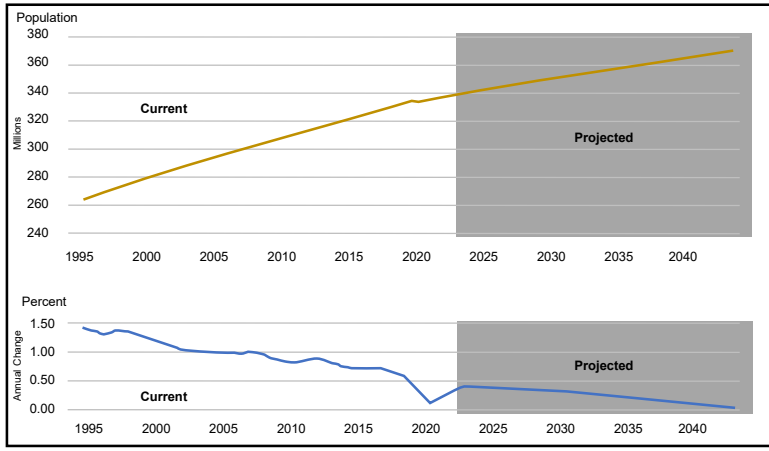
Data From: William H. Frey, "Now, More than Half of Americans Are Millennials or Younger," Brookings, 30 July 2020, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/07/30/now-more-than-half-of-americans-are-millennials-or-younger/.

Figure 2.19. Share of United States Population by Generation.

Source: Created by Army University Press.

The labor market is also experiencing the effects of a large-scale exodus of talent. The Baby Boomer generation (born 1946 to 1964) left the workforce in large numbers during the pandemic.[34] In 2020 alone, this amounted to 28.6 million total retirements.[35] For Generation X (born 1965 to 1980), the oldest members are only five years away from average retirement age. These two generations constitute 41.8 percent of the US population, with millennials only recently taking the lead as the largest segment of the US population at 22 percent and Gen Z constituting 20.3 percent (Figure 2.19).[36] Taken in aggregate, these workforce losses have reduced the workforce participation rate by nearly 5 percent over the past twenty years and will likely continue to exert downward effects until Gen Z is fully employed.[37]

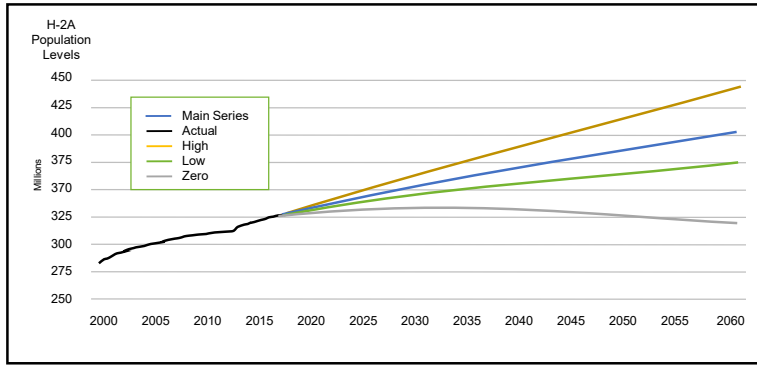
During the same period, US annual population growth slowed significantly from 1.01 percent in 2002 to 0.38 percent in 2022.[38] This means



Data From: United Nations, "World Population Prospects 2022," United Nations, https://population.un.org/wpp/.

Figure 2.20. Annual Percentage Change in Growth Rate as it Relates to United States Population.

Source: Created by Army University Press.



Data From: David J. Bier, "Census Finds U.S. Population Will Decline Without Immigration," Cato Institute (blog), modified 14 February 2020, https://www.cato.org/blog/census-finds-us-population-will-decline-without-immigration.

Figure 2.21. United States Population Projections by Year under Varying Immigration Levels 2017 to 2020.

Source: Created by Army University Press.

that while the US population grew by approximately 50 million from 2002 to present, it is projected to grow by only 30.5 million over the next twenty years, further reducing the pool of available recruits (Figure 2.20).[39] These estimates are complicated by America's dependence on immigration for a large part of its population growth. A 2020 Cato Institute study showed that without immigration, the US population would begin to decline as

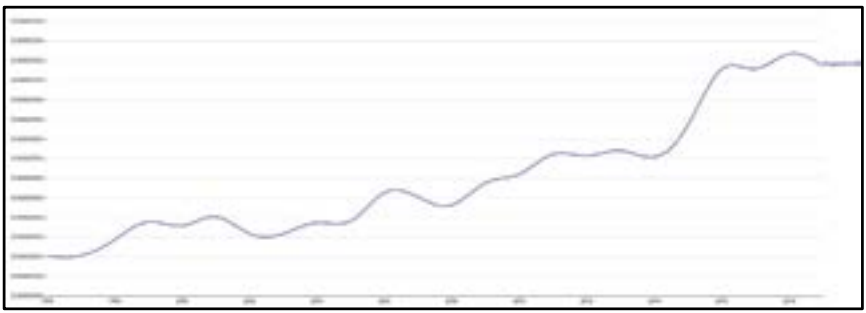


Figure 2.22. Frequency of Phrase "Purpose in Life" in the Google Corpus of English Books from Years 1996 to 2019.

Source: Created by the author using Google Books Ngram Viewer," accessed 7 March 2023, https://books.google.com/ngrams.

early as 2036 (Figure 2.21 on the previous page).[40] These forces in labor make it even more important for the Army to improve its recruiting efforts, as well as work to retain skilled and qualified soldiers.

Clearly both near-term changes and long-term trends are creating an increasingly competitive US labor market. Unemployment rates, compensation, and public perception of the military underpin these decisions at an individual level. More deeply, Millennials and Gen Z are increasingly seeking purpose, a trend that is reflected in the frequency counts of the word "purpose" in English language literature from 1996 when early Millennials started writing to 2015 when early Gen Z began writing (Figure 2.22).[41]

If Google Ngram frequency counts are any guide, the US Army is not closing the knowledge gap (Figure 2.23). Ngram, which searches the corpus of English literature by year for specific key words, is one way to evaluate the presence of key words in the public consciousness. Evaluating the Army using this tool reveals a shrinking body of public discourse on the Army and concomitantly reduced knowledge of service. Roughly 0.5 percent of the American public has served on active duty at any given time since 9/11.[42] This decline is expected to continue because of continued voluntary service and evolving technology. While the smaller percentage of Americans in military service alone is not a cause for concern, the resulting decrease in understanding between the military and the broader US society presents significant challenges for the future of American defense.[43] For a military where 83 percent of people who join the Army have

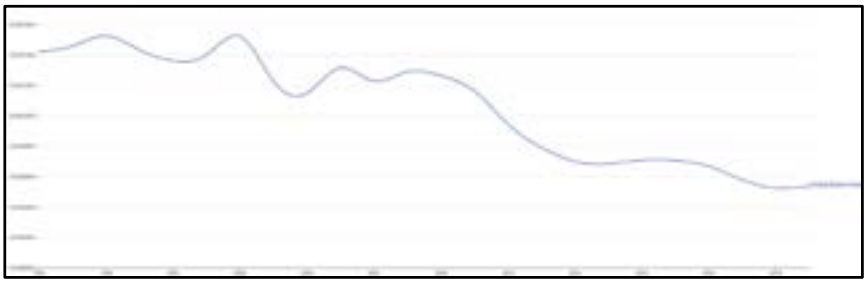


Figure 2.23. Frequency of Phrase "United States Army" in the Google Corpus of English Books from Year, 1996 to 2019.

Source: Created by the author using Google Books Ngram Viewer," accessed 7 March 2023, https://books.google.com/ngrams.

a relative who served, this presents the problem of a diminishing pool of applicants who could even see themselves serving as soldiers.[44]

Lack of knowledge and lack of trust go hand in hand. Knowledge is unlikely to be transmitted without a trusted agent and without knowledge and trust, Gen Z will not be able to identify with military service. Ironically, Gen Z values many of the benefits that the Army already offers. A meta-analysis of seventeen studies on Gen Z career preferences identified six general frameworks which govern their preferences (Figure 2.24 on the next page): Boundless Careers, Career Anchors, Theory of Planned Behavior, Career Theory, Social Capital Theory, and Personal Branding.[45] Briefly, Gen Z seeks unbounded career growth within a single organization, with the ability to grow laterally into multiple roles across that organization. Gen Z also values jobs which require teamwork, but will perceive an uncompetitive salary as a significant barrier. Despite their aversion to low pay, they value lifestyle as a career anchor around which they will make most career-related decisions. As part of this anchor, they expect a psychological contract with their organization which includes freedom and flexibility in response to their needs. Finally, this generation seeks to leverage social capital to advance career goals and develop a unique online persona of personal branding for future jobs and careers. Approaching a generation which increasingly relies on social media platforms like TikTok for communication, how-to knowledge—and even news—may be the Army's toughest challenge in the knowledge gap.[46]

Framework	Description	Matching Army Features/Values	Features/Values Deficit
Boundless Careers	Career growth across multiple roles within one organization	Green to Gold, Diverse Jobs, Internal Unit Job Changes	No sense of mentorship, little stability/predictability
Career Anchors	Three categories Needs (1), Values (2), Talent (3)	Healthcare, leave, ancillary benefits, pay, education	Ill-defined work-life boundary in garrison
Theory of Planned Behavior	Study of attitudes/ norms: Gen Z desires work with people and values pay highly	Competitive pay with stable predictable raises, teams-based structure	Rigid hierarchy, siloed workspaces, benefits poorly communicated
Career Theory (person-environmental fit)	Individual values must match organizational values	Army diversity initiatives	Lack of autonomy, bureaucratic risk management
Social Capital Theory	Relationships—Networks leveraged for career success	AIM "Who you know," small Army community	Lack of stability reduces relationships
Personal Branding	Gen Z uses technology and social media to create unique personal brand	None	The Army's OPSEC program makes embracing this aspect of Gen Z very difficult

Data From: Bhagyashree Barhate and Khalil Dirani, "Career Aspirations of Generation Z: A Systematic Literature Review," *European Journal of Training and Development* 46, no. 1/2 (January 2022): 139–57.

Figure 2.24. Comparison of Generation Z Career Preferences with Army Features (Values).

Source: Created by the author.

Within these frameworks, Gen Z seeks value alignment with their organization's culture; misalignment has demonstrably resulted in high turnover in this mobile workforce. Intrinsic factors also play a role in this generation's decisions. Broad general trends are applicable and explored here. Gen Z's attitudes reflect confidence and tenacity with an entrepreneurial bent. They leverage their networks to attain goals, but do not shy away from self-reliance. When this is combined with a strong labor market, many Gen Z workers likely perceive that they hold the upper hand over employers. They are motivated by recognition, a sense of purpose in their work, and feeling valued by their organization.

Extrinsic factors also impact Gen Z decision-making. Family and peer perception of career choices have impacts, though not decisive ones, on career choice. Instability throughout the life of Gen Z—from 9/11, to

the 2008 housing crisis, and the 2020 COVID Pandemic-associated recession—caused Gen Z parents to lose jobs and struggle financially. According to several studies within the meta-analysis, these experiences colored Gen Z perceptions of stability and risk assessment. For instance, they aspire to stable careers and typically desire to start families by age 33. Despite seeking stability, however, Gen Z prefers an independent work culture which is minimally constrained. Indeed, the five most sought-after workplaces on Glassdoor, a workplace review site, were IBM, Google, Amazon, Microsoft, and Deloitte. Phrases like flexible hours, good pay, and work environment feature prominently in Gen Z reviews, indicating that members of this generation desire the stability of working for large, international organizations but want to do so on their own terms.

Finally, Gen Z has specific expectations regarding the workplace. They desire an organization that offers open-style work spaces vs. closed-door offices. They value building relationships and a diverse culture, and an active and engaged workplace culture. Within this culture, they expect opportunities for learning, mentorship, and advancement within an organization that values the stability of growth through a long-term career. These preferences argue for more personal, less-mechanistic personnel management to help develop trusting relationships and an intentional culture. This emphasis on relationships, culture, and long-term growth within the same organization might best be summed up as "belonging." A modern regimental system, which prioritizes stability, community, and culture, may offer many of the qualities which Gen Z appears to be seeking.

The case study in this book will explore how the British Army 1868 to 1919 navigated many of the same fluctuating factors, including knowledge, trust, and identity gaps. The British Army also faced some culturally similar propensities for and against service as well as economic and geopolitical considerations that mirror the US situation more than a century later. First, however, a brief primer is needed to understand the history underpinning both the British Army and the regimental system within it. For a detailed history on the advent of the BRS 1661 to 1868, see Appendix A.

Notes

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10. Department of Defense, "2020 Demographics Profile."

11. Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019," 27.

12. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "Explore by Topic," accessed 6 April 2023, https://nccd.cdc.gov/dnpao_dtm/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=DNPAO_DTM.ExploreByTopic&islClass=OWS&islTopic=&go=GO.

13. Department of Defense, "Population Representation in the Military Services, 2019."

14. Chris Mace, "Survey Unveils Gen Z Misconceptions About US Army," *FEDweek*, 23 June 2022, https://www.fedweek.com/armed-forces-news/survey-unveils-gen-z-misconceptions-about-us-army/.

15. Association of the United States Army, "Survey: Gen Z Unaware of Many Benefits of Service," 17 June 2022, https://www.ausa.org/news/survey-gen-z-unaware-many-benefits-service.

16. Sarah Sicard, "New Army Recruitment Series Is a Scathing Indictment of American Society," *Military Times*, 22 April 2022, https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2022/04/22/new-army-recruitment-series-is-a-scathing-indictment-of-american-society/.

17. US Army, "U.S. Army March to Service Campaign," *STAND-TO!*, 18 March 2022, https://www.army.mil/standto/archive/2022/03/18/.

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Chapter 3
Research Methodology

This case study views the British Regimental System 1868 to 1919 through the lens of the current US Army recruiting crisis. It compares two powerful, global military cultures and their recruitment practices during long periods of peace punctuated by limited war and eventual large-scale combat, drawing lessons on how British regimental culture affected recruitment and retention that can be applied to US forces today.

The previous chapter examined the results of the US Army's current recruiting and retention strategies, and characterized the civilian job market in terms of unemployment, incentives, and worker preferences. To characterize the current recruiting environment, the author completed an extensive literature review to describe the current recruiting environment in which the US Army operates. This literature review also included a primer on the British Regimental System (BRS) leading up to the period under study.

With the current recruiting environment more fully characterized, this case study examines the reforms to the British Regimental System between 1868 and 1919 following three lines of effort. First, it examined what shortfalls the reforms were intended to address. Next, it assessed whether the reforms effectively improved recruitment and retention. Finally, it analyzed how such changes might be applied to US Army policy as it navigates the current personnel crisis.

This study is conducted in the framework of the exploratory, single case study methodology described by American social scientist R. K. Yin.[1] Yin divides the case study process into five phases: (1) Identification, (2) Preparation, (3) Collection, (4) Analysis, and (5) Reporting. First, the author identified this case and justified its applicability for comparison with the US Army today. This involved two fundamental steps: defining the case and bounding it. To define the case, the author chose a culturally similar military system and bounded it by examining this military during a time period of global hegemonic dominance similar to the United States. Other potential cases considered included the French military culture due to similarities in doctrine as well as the militaries of other commonwealth nations such as Canada or Australia—ultimately choosing the British Army recruiting crisis from 1856 to 1899 because of that country's position as a truly global world power and cultural similarity between Britain

and the United States. Further analysis of the validity of this comparison is conducted as a preface to the analysis section.

Second, the author established a collection plan—first characterizing the current US Army recruiting crisis through literature review in the context of social and economic forces at work in the country over the past two decades. The next step was to become familiar with social and economic circumstances of the period under study in Britain through secondary sources before moving into the military realm, as these are likely to underpin recruiting efforts. Subsequently, the author studied secondary military history sources then moved into primary source archival research to evaluate efforts by decision-makers of the day. This was a gradual transition from preparation to information collection. Yin recommends choosing an analytic technique. This case study uses explanation building as its overarching technique.

Explanation building is a form of pattern matching in which the "how" or "why" of a case are ascertained through iterative hypothesis generation and evaluation of evidence. Because information is often not fully quantifiable, this is conducted in narrative form. In this study, explanation building consisted of looking at recruitment, retention, reconstitution, and ancillary gains to draw more broadly generalizable information.

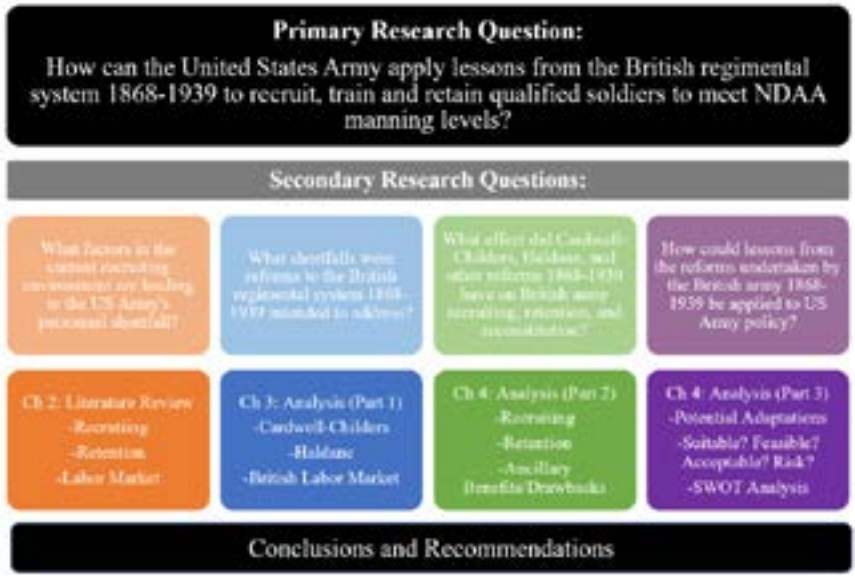

Figure 3.1. Graphical Representation of Research Method.

Source: Created by the author.

Instead of mimicking a specific unit structure, the US Army might apply the effects garnered by that structure in that time, place, and context to close one of the three gaps. This guided the generation of research questions shown in Figure 3.1.

To categorize this information into analytic units, the author used a modified version of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis.[2] This is a business technique designed to evaluate a project based on designated characteristics and determine how to take advantage of internal and external elements of a system to either protect or enhance project operations. The technique examines a 2 x 2 representation of helpful and harmful internal and external elements of a project (see Figure 3.2 below). This analysis was applied to the US Army in its current state, as well as the benefits derived from the BRS in its own time. This allowed characterization of strengths and weaknesses as well as evaluation of external factors that shaped each organization under study.

Once Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis was completed, the identified were compared in cross-tabulation between the BRS and the US Army to determine where applying regimental elements

Origin	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Strength	Weakness
External	Opportunities	Threats

Figure 3.2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

		BRITISH REGIMENTAL SYSTEM		
		Strengths	Weaknesses	
US ARMY	Strengths	Win Big	Risks	Mitigations
	Weaknesses	Improve Weakness	Catastrophic Failure	

Figure 3.3. Cross-Tabulation Structure for Application of Regimental Elements to US Army.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

would result in big wins, mitigated weaknesses, weakened US strength, or catastrophic failure (see Figure 3.3 on the previous page).

This process allowed binning of regimental elements to the three gaps that Army senior leaders identified as critical to recruitment efforts today, while also examining other potential benefits that such reforms might provide.[3] The study then developed proposals to align regimental elements against one or more gap. Each proposal was then evaluated using the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) framework.[4] This analysis method compares multiple variables of a specific problem to determine whether a materiel or non-materiel change is required to meet a capability gap. If a capability gap is best served by a non-materiel change, it generates a DOTMLPF-P change recommendation to be implemented through the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System. To narrow the study, the author concentrated on the Leadership, Personnel, and Policy domains which were most germane to this case. This analysis identified three DOTMLPF-P change recommendations for Army leadership to apply to regimental elements and help improve recruitment, retention, and reconstitution and provide ancillary benefits.

Summary

Methodologically, this study compares British Army recruiting issues between 1868 and 1919 to current challenges experienced by the US Army. The single case explanatory case study methodology broadly characterizes aspects of the British Regimental System 1868 to 1919 that could be applied to the US Army. Regimental elements are binned using Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats analysis and cross-tabulated against US Army strengths and weaknesses. Beneficial cross tabulations are applied against the "three gaps" currently hindering recruitment as well as retention and reconstitution as capability gaps. Finally, the author examines potential solutions to these gaps using DOTMLPF-P—concentrating on leadership, personnel, and policy domains and suggests three potential DOTMLPF-P change recommendations which would, if implemented, improve US Army recruiting and retention.

Notes

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Chapter 4
Recruiting for a Globally Committed Military

Before analyzing Britain's Cardwell, Childers, and Haldane reforms and drawing lessons from the country's regimental system, it is important to evaluate wider conditions which shaped the effectiveness of these changes. This comparison is best accomplished through the juxtaposition of various national power elements in the Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic (DIME) framework. DIME's broad categories apply across the comparison between Britain in 1880 as the Cardwell reforms came into effect, to the United States in 2022. When the Cardwell reforms took full effect in 1880, Britain was arguably at its height as a colonial empire. Similarly, the United States from 1991 to 2012 was a unipolar super-power and today remains the most powerful single geopolitical force. Diplomatic relationships are broken down further into those with developing nations and relationships between great powers. In 1880, Britain had significant colonial commitments diplomatically. Notably, the country was embroiled in a "Scramble for Africa," which eventually led to the 1884 Berlin Conference and regulated partition of the continent. Today the United States is similarly competing for influence in Africa against Russia and China through economic cooperation and neocolonial economic policy. While the United States does not possess colonies, it does have military forces protecting national interests stationed on every continent

Diplomatic		
	Britain 1880	**United States 2022**
Relationships with Developing Nations	Colonial	Economic Partnership vs Economic Neo-Colonialism
Relationships with Great Powers	Realpolitik, Preservation of Naval Dominance, Colonial Interests	Within International Order: Cooperative—Competitive Outside International Order: National Interests/Realpolitik

Figure 4.1. Diplomatic Comparison of 1880 Britain and 2022 United States.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

Informational		
	Britain 1880	**United States 2022**
Literacy (Defined in Britain as Ability to Sign Marriage Register and in the United States as Ability to Write and Understand Basic Sentences)	95 percent (15-year-old Children)[1] 85 percent (Male Population)[3] 80 percent (Female Population)[4]	92 percent[2]
Cultural Influence	Colonial, Trade	Hegemonic, Pervasive through Media

[1] Edwin West, "The Spread of Education Before Compulsion: Britain and America in the Nineteenth Century," Foundation for Economic Education, 1 July 1996, https://fee.org/articles/the-spread-of-education-before-compulsion-britain-and-america-in-the-nineteenth-century/.
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[4] National Center for Education Statistics, "Adult Literacy in the United States," US Department of Education, July 2019, https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019179/index.asp.

Figure 4.2. Informational Comparison of 1880 Britain and 2022 United States.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

except Antarctica and naval forces protecting the global commons. Thus, 1880 Britain and present-day US diplomatic interests are similar, if perhaps more refined. Britain sought naval dominance to secure its position as a global power and protect colonial interests. The United States utilizes naval and ground forces to protect the global commons and rules-based international order, while helping to develop nations through a spectrum of cooperative and coercive means.

Informationally, 1880 Britain and the present-day United States literacy rates are comparable. Britain had recent adopted universal public schooling, which helped improve literacy rates among younger generations. Interestingly, this happened about the same time as the Cardwell reforms. The "Royal Commission on the State of Popular Education in England," which was appointed in 1858, created the 1870 Elementary Education Act for universal education to the masses.[1] Meanwhile, British cultural influence travelled its trade routes to colonial possessions, leaving indelible marks in India and elsewhere. The United States similarly exerts significant cultural influence through its dominant position in media production and trade.[2]

Economically, both nations were undoubtedly great powers, though there were some major differences. Britain in 1880 had an economy which was oriented more toward manufacturing than the present-day United

Economic		
	Britain 1880	**United States 2022**
Percent of Total Global Manufacturing Output	22.9 percent[1]	16.9 percent[2]
Percent of World GDP[3]	13.2 percent[4]	27.4 percent[5]
Unemployment Rate	6.1 percent (Mean 1870–91)[6]	5.6 percent (Mean 2013–22)[7]
Percentage of GNP Devoted to first two years of Crimean War (1853–54) vs Ukraine 2022–23)	0.68 percent[8]	0.46 percent[9]

[1] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 202.
[2] Macrotrends, "U.S. Manufacturing Output 1997–2022," Macrotrends, accessed 20 December 2022, https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/USA/united-states/manufacturing-output.
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[5] World Bank, "GDP (Current US$)," World Bank, accessed 5 January 2023, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?name_desc=true.
[6] George Boyer and Timothy Hatton, "New Estimates of British Unemployment, 1870–1913," *Journal of Economic History* 62, no. 3 (September 2002): 643–75.
[7] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Civilian Unemployment Rate," Bureau of Labor and Statistics, accessed 31 October 2022, https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/civilian-unemployment-rate.htm.
[8] Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, 176.
[9] Mark F. Cancian, "Aid to Ukraine Explained in Six Charts," Center for Strategic and International Studies, 18 November 2022, https://www.csis.org/analysis/aid-ukraine-explained-six-charts.

Figure 4.3. Economic Comparison of 1880 Britain and 2022 United States.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

States. It produced less than half the percentage of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that the United States does today. This reflects the legacy of America's time as a unipolar world power versus Britain's history of competition against peer great powers. It may be instructive to examine how they managed to do more with less as the United States now faces a multipolar world and the return of great power competition. Domestic metrics such as unemployment levels are remarkably similar.

Militarily, Britain and the United States share a heritage but also a similar history of conflict (see Figure 4.4 on the next page). Britain in 1880 had a wealth of experience in small wars and colonial policing, but had not participated in large scale conflict since Crimea. Similarly, the United States is now re-orienting from Counterinsurgency to prepare itself for possible large-scale combat operations (LSCO). Interestingly, despite its relatively small Active Duty Army, Britain had a much larger percentage of its population under arms, than does the United States today.

Military		
Recent Military Experience	Ongoing Small Wars, Global Commons Policing, Colonial Protection	Ongoing Small Wars, Global Commons Policing
Last LSCO Conflict	25 years prior (Crimea)	31 years prior (Iraq)
Percentage of Population under Arms (British Home Island Only, Active Duty Only)	1 percent[1]	0.4 percent[2]
Percent Global Naval Aggregate Tonnage	71 percent[3]	48.4 percent (2019 US displacement data, 2006 Global aggregate displacement data)[4]

[1] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 199.
[2] Department of Defense, "2020 Demographics Profile," (report, Military OneSource), accessed 24 October 2022, 3, https://www.militaryonesource.mil/data-research-and-statistics/military-community-demographics/2020-demographics-profile.
[3] Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, 203.
[4] Keith "Powder" Patton," "Battle Force Missiles: The Measure of a Fleet," Center for International Maritime Security, 24 April 2019, https://cimsec.org/battle-force-missiles-the-measure-of-a-fleet/; and Robert O. Work, "'Economics' and Established Maritime Powers: Resource Implications of the New Maritime Strategy," in National Security Economics Papers, ed. Richmond M. Lloyd (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2006), 55–72.

Figure 4.4. Military Comparison of 1880 Britain and 2022 United States.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

Taken together, the DIME elements paint a picture of two global powers at their peak. Both had far-flung diplomatic and military commitments, though they had not fought a war with a major power in recent memory. They were cultural powers of their time. Their economic power differed significantly, reflecting differing patterns of competition and a different composition of national industry. Despite this, economic conditions within both nations were relatively similar with comparable levels of unemployment and literacy. Britain from 1868 to 1919 offers a period of cultural and military change very similar to our own, in an economic milieu that appears more and more similar as multipolar competition returns to the world stage. Britain 1868 to 1919 is therefore a valid and useful case for study, though hopefully one which does not end with another Great War.

Reforms 1868 to 1914: Toward a Modern Army

The following analysis considers changes instituted in the British Army between 1868 and the start of the Great War, keeping in mind the shortfalls they were intended to address. Maj. Gen. H. S. G. Miles, com-

Reforms	
1660–1870	The Regimental system develops organically as early regiments were raised and maintained but required additional adjustment.
1870–1893	The Cardwell/Childers reforms address changing societal norms by reducing the term of service and introducing linked battalions to shorten time overseas.
1893	The linked battalion system becomes unbalanced as it lacks any buffering mechanism, resulting in the Wantage and Drafts committees
1900–1903	Broderick administration under Secretary of War William St. John Broderick institutes a three-year service alongside longer terms as well as increased pay
1904	Escher report summarizes army shortfalls during Second Boer War and recommends radical reorganization.
1906–1912	Haldane reforms reorganize the Army into an expeditionary force, territorial force, and reserve.

Data From: H. S. G. Miles, "The Army System: Establishments, Recruits, Drafts, and Reserves" (Lecture presented at the Conference held by the Chief of the General Staff, January 1906), 1.

Figure 4.5. Overview of Changes in Recruiting in the British Army 1868 to 1906.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

mander Victorian Order, Companion Most Honourable Order of the Bath, offers a near-contemporaneous summary of changes that impacted Army manpower. In his 1906 lecture on Army recruits at a general staff conference, he covers the changes from 1868 through 1906.[3] Miles's outline (Figure 4.5 above) helps organize the historical case and allow examination of the policies which professionalized, organized, and recruited the British Army. These changes modernized the British Army organization and personnel policies, setting the stage for the Haldane reforms after the turn of the century and providing the foundation for the army which entered World War I in 1914.

Subsequently, this book will briefly examine the regimental system's performance in World War I regarding recruiting and reconstitution and review how the system served as a framework for rapid expansion

of a small expeditionary Army into a fully committed LSCO force many times its original size. Finally, this analysis will look at how the system performed during demobilization and the inter-war years as the Army navigated another period of reduced financial and political support in the years leading up to World War II (WWII). Additional details will be provided in Appendix B.

The Cardwell-Childers Reforms: 1868 to 1881

The period between the end of the Crimean War and the Boer War saw a very difficult recruiting environment for the British Army. Between 1861 and 1882, end strength was decreased every year because of insufficient recruits; despite those reductions, end strength was never met.[4] Meanwhile, Prussia's 1871 victory over France demonstrated to the world the superiority of a modern staff system in warfare, leading every major European power to imitate the country's military innovation.[5] These developments engendered a sense of urgency among the British political elite at the War Office—an urgency not necessarily shared among the higher ranks of serving officers—to modernize the British Army.

In response, Britain adopted successive waves of military reforms throughout the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s as the country experienced increasing democratization through public education. This resulted in clashes between reform politicians and the British Army's conservative institutions. The British military, meanwhile, was coping with the fast pace of weapon development and distant colonial conflicts.[6] Amid these increased commitments, the government and consequently the Army were also enduring financial fluctuations. From 1851 to 1881, the British economy had been surging with per-capita Gross National Product (GNP) increasing by an inflation-adjusted thirty-seven percent while the population doubled in the same period.[7] Although this growth reflects early surges, the Army faced a reduced budget by the mid-1870s due to the Long Depression, which had started with the Panic of 1873.[8] This worldwide depression led to marked economic stagnation in Britain. In the United States, this period was known as the Great Depression until a new benchmark for economic failure was set in the 1930s. These multiple factors, together with falling recruiting numbers, created a ripe environment for reform within the War Office—conducted under the combined aegis of modernization and cost cutting.

When Edward Cardwell became secretary of state for war in 1868, he undertook reforms primarily to streamline and modernize service. There was growing criticism of the existing regimental system as aristocratic rather than merit-based, rendering it unsuitable for modern war.[9] Card-

well found himself faced pressure to modernize and economize the force, something not easily accomplished simultaneously. General Miles writes that the Cardwell reforms were the "real foundation of the modern military system" and could best be characterized under the headings of Officers, Organization, and Conditions of Service.[10] Although Cardwell faced an uphill battle, the War Office Act and Army Enlistment Act passed in 1870 institutionalized the reforms necessary to modernize the Army.[11]

When it came to reforms among the officer ranks, prevailing attitudes among the military establishment were not in Cardwell's favor. The War Office, which answered to Parliament, did not have clear authority over the commander in chief of the Army, who was appointed by the monarch.[12] It was not until the War Office Act was passed that the commander in chief was clearly subordinate to the War Office and, therefore, Parliament. The duke of Cambridge, for instance, opined that British officers should place being a gentleman first and being an officer second. Serving as commander in chief throughout this period, he opposed all civilian meddling in military affairs, reflecting the conservative aristocratic roots of the British Army of that era.

Prior to the Cardwell reforms, Britain retained a system of purchase for officer commissions. For each level up to a lieutenant colonel, the promotion required purchase of the next level of commission and sale of one's prior commission. Though these prices were fixed by Royal Warrant, the thriving marketplace for their purchase resulted in more prestigious units commanding over-regulation prices. Meanwhile, British Army enlisted pay had not substantially increased in 123 years.[13] This system favored the wealthy for promotion and often left able officers of lesser means to languish. Even those with no ambition for promotion could not expect to

	Foot Guards	Infantry of the Line
Ensign	$ 217,500	$ 81,600
Lieutenant	$ 371,700	$126,900
Captain	$ 870,300	$326,400
Major	$1,504,900	$580,200
Lieutenant Colonel	$1,631,800	$815,900

Data From: Byron Farwell, *Mr. Kipling's Army* (New York: Norton, 1987), 58.

Figure 4.6. Costs of Promotion under Purchase System Circa 1840 (adjusted for inflation).

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

serve in the most prestigious units such as Guards regiments without a private income of nearly 500 pounds (£) per year, equivalent to US$2,500 in 1840 dollars.[14]

Into this milieu enter Secretary Cardwell, who was emphatically not a military man. In fact, his protégé Col. Garnet Wolseley noted: "There was nothing in common between him and the fighting British soldier. The ambitions, the prospects, the feelings, and prejudices of our officers were not known to him."[15] Wolseley, who served as adjutant general under Cardwell, helped the secretary navigate military opposition. He was later promoted to field marshal and eventually served as commander in chief. Garnet Wolseley was a prime example of a well-positioned military officer who helped guide civil-military change in a way which benefited both the military and the people it served. Cardwell meanwhile had a knack for systems and saw the abolition of the practice of purchased commissions as buying the army back from its officers. Though abolishing paid commissions cost the Army the equivalent of US$35 million (more than US$1 billion in 2025 dollars), it was a requisite step toward overcoming an entrenched military aristocracy.[16]

To improve British Army recruiting prospects, Cardwell also drastically altered the terms and character of service. In one line of effort, he attempted to improve quality of life, or at least the public face of army life. These changes included abolition of military punishment such as flogging, improved education, and provision for work in trades after discharge.[17] Additional emoluments included better barracks and food. Improved pay was also instituted as an inducement to service and to incentivize better soldier behavior.

Good conduct pay was improved to take effect at two years instead of three, meat and bread rations were made free rather than taken from soldier pay, and in 1873 the allotment of money specifically for beer was abolished to curtail drunkenness.[18] Cardwell also provided an improved (if still meager) monetary disbursement when soldiers left service. This disbursement was saved at the rate of two British Pence (or a Penny) per day from their pay to allow them to start civilian life with a sum of money, partially because of concern about instituting short service.[19] Overall, these changes were intended to encourage better management of talent and improve recruiting by creating a more favorable impression of Army service as an officer or a rank. Without a doubt, however, these changes began the process of professionalizing the force by attracting citizens for whom the Army was just one of many possible career choices.[20]

Short service continued to be seen as a solution to recruiting woes, and Cardwell's reforms brought this scheme to fruition. In the 1860s, two separate royal commissions found that while respectable working-class men were willing to fight to defend Britain in the volunteers, they were loath to join up with the regulars. Prior to the reforms, the regular Army filled its ranks with the "dregs" of society through a mixture of financial bounties, alcohol, and outright deception.[21] To help divest the British Army of soldiers of this type, the Army Enlistment Act of 1870 shortened the infantry term of service and introduced measures which made it easier for the army get rid of bad apples within its ranks. The term of service was shortened to seven years with the colours (Active), followed by five years Reserve Service with the intent of recruiting a better species of soldier and a trained, qualified reserve force.

Short service was meant to alter the view of military service as a lifelong commitment which would only appeal to the desperate. Instead, a seven-year term of active service was hoped to present a picture of adventure after which a soldier could resume normal life. There remained, however, a strong social and familial disapprobation to military enlistment. One soldier who joined in 1877 wrote about his father's disapproval:

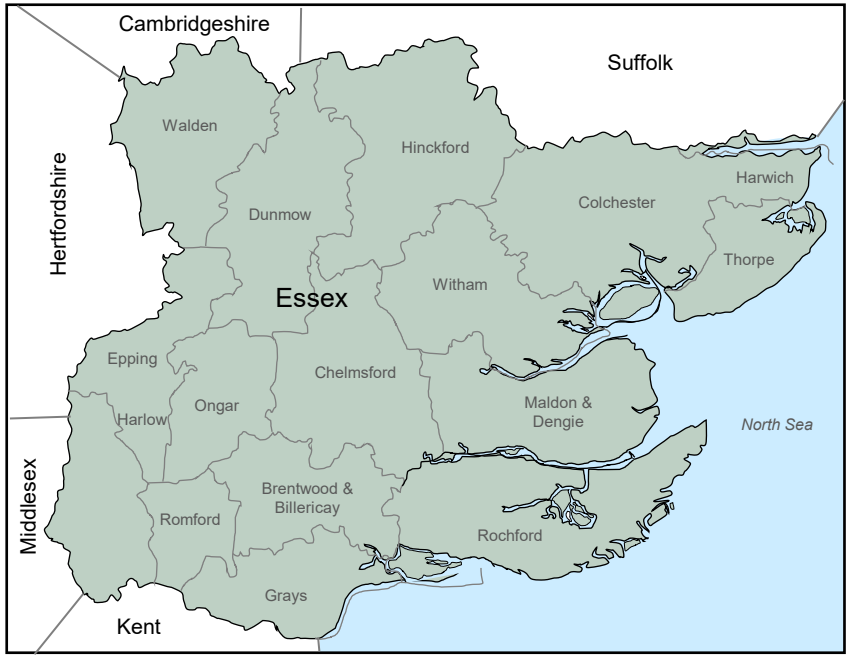
> To him my step was a blow from which he thought he would never recover, for it meant disgrace of the worst type. His son a soldier! He could not believe his ears. Rather would he have had me out of work for the rest of my life than earning my living in such a manner. More than that, he would rather see me in my grave.[22]

Military leaders, on the other hand, were just as concerned as they had been when the term of service was reduced from twenty-one years to ten in 1846.[23] Lord Chelmsford, then embroiled in the Anglo-Zulu War, worried that short service would deprive them of soldiers just as they became effective around six years of service, and that soldiers with less than three years' service could not be trusted in battle.[24] The duke of Cambridge opposed the bill on those grounds and presented a strong dissenting opinion that the British Army should enlist soldiers for exactly as long as they meant to keep them, rather than allowing short service.[25]

During this time, soldiers enlisted to a regiment and stayed in that regiment for their entire career. Regiment officers would do the same up to the level of lieutenant colonel, often serving in staff jobs outside their home regiments. The British system had three key benefits which the US Army currently does not reap from its own system. First, soldiers and of-

ficers developed a strong attachment to their unit, its traditions, and its history and developed shared understanding resulting in agile, cohesive action in the face of complex problems or poor leadership. Second, soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers could leverage the longevity with their unit to see through long-term initiatives and affect leadership "culture" rather than merely affecting "climate." Finally, the long-term regional alignment of regiments to specific colonial duties allowed solders to develop expertise and institutional knowledge absent in what noted historian Colin Gray calls the "culturally ignorant" American way of war.[26]

Organizationally, Cardwell's reforms created local recruiting territories and depots for each unit and affiliated battalions in pairs under a regiment.[27] The Childers reforms subsequently codified that regiments should include at least two linked battalions which would rotate overseas assignments.[28] These new regiments also included at least one territorial battalion and were organized similar to French demi-brigades a century earlier or US round-out brigades a century later. Finally, the British Army



Data From: Map of Recruiting Areas, County of Essex, Call # 6112/596/142, United Kingdom National Army Museum Templer Study Center Collection, 1912.

Figure 4.7. Map of Recruiting Areas, County of Essex, 1912.

Source: Created by Army University Press.

established fixed recruiting territories for each regiment and based them in training depots located within these territories.[29]

The result was a system which had both advantages and significant drawbacks. Linking battalions essentially created an effective generating force in an army where training was conducted at the unit depot level, soldiers typically only served for seven years, and overseas tours were often four to six years. The system also improved public exposure to the military through local recruiting but apparently did not improve overall recruiting during the period under study. The necessity to maintain an equal number of battalions abroad and at home initially reduced costs as colonies began to assume more of the burden of their own defense. Because of the inelastic nature of the linking, however, Cardwell's system quickly became unbalanced if there were any unprogrammed overseas requirements.

Prior to the linking reforms, the British Army always maintained more battalions abroad than at home. With 132 total battalions in 1859, for instance, the British Army kept 72 in India, 30 in other colonies, and 30 at home spread between England and Ireland.[30] When instituted in 1872, the balancing of battalions at home and abroad placed 71 battalions abroad and 70 at home; but by 1879, this ratio slid to 82 abroad and 59 at home during the Anglo-Zulu War.[31] By 1891, the number again stabilized at 76 abroad and 75 at home—only to be strained to the near breaking point by the Second Boer War.[32]

The scale and complexity of this new conflict was larger than any since the Crimean War. As a result, the British Army employed 238,000 British regulars and reservists; 18,000 Indian Army Regulars; 30,000 locally raised soldiers; 52,000 militia; and 110,000 activated British home defense forces (akin to the US National Guard).[33] The British were slow to adapt during the conflict itself but in the post-mortem period came to several salient conclusions. First, the system of regiments and battalions did not provide enough support units, flexibility, or command and control for large-scale combat operations. Second, the army could not sustain activated militia for any length of time during a conflict of any magnitude due to manpower and support deficiencies.[34]

These deficiencies were abundantly clear to British adversaries on the continent, where tensions were again on the rise. Prussian statesman Otto von Bismarck, for instance, reputedly stated that if the British invaded his country, he would "simply ask the police to arrest them."[35] While Britain had long relied on the navy as its primary instrument of military foreign policy, the lack of a credible Army would become acutely felt as the British

and French began planning mutual defense after the Entente Cordiale in 1904. The Second Boer War demonstrated the regimental system's fundamental organizational deficiency in large-scale conflict and crystalized British concern about shortfalls of the army structure. These conclusions were codified in the 1904 Esher Report.[36] The signing of the Entente Cordiale increased continental commitments and added urgency to military reformer efforts. This urgency would drive significant change under the leadership and political acumen of British Secretary of State for War Richard Burton Haldane. Haldane, through skill and persistence, achieved more than would have been politically possible even a decade before.

The Haldane Reforms: 1906 to 1912

When Richard Burton Haldane took office as Secretary of War in 1905, he was asked what type of army he wanted to create to meet the needs of Britain. He replied: "A Hegelian Army."[37] Haldane, a student of philosophy, appreciated German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's approach to evaluation, which followed thinking from thesis to anti-thesis creating tension which was resolved in synthesis into higher truth. Haldane sought to do the same in his reforms by involving stakeholders from all spheres of the military and civil arenas. This typifies why his approach succeeded when his predecessors St John Brodrick and H. O. Arnold-Forster failed. Both clearly perceived the difficulties facing the Army but were unable to influence institutional change. Haldane's innate understanding of thesis—anti-thesis, political acumen, fastidious avoidance of expressing pre-conceived notions, and outreach to the general officer corps—enabled him to effectively implement changes which would prepare the British Army and the regimental system to face more modern continental warfare threats in 1914.[38]

Haldane saw recruiting as an important component of this effort and acknowledged that the Army continued to struggle with recruiting due to three main factors: poor public image, low pay, and awkward terms of service.[39] Haldane's reforms in many ways continued the trends seen previously under Cardwell and Childers. He introduced significant quality of life improvements such as bathing facilities, improved dining halls, increased pay, and a system of centrally supported regimental libraries.[40] To these he added increased outreach efforts in educational institutions, including an improved Public School Cadet Corps—Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) analogue—and University Volunteer Corps—Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) analogue—as potential feeder sources for the officer corps.[41]

Examining the post-Boer War recruiting landscape, Haldane concluded that the current Army structure was unsustainable under short service, and that the British people had no appetite for conscription.[42] Rather than chafe at these constraints, he instead used them to catalyze the creation of a smaller, modern, expeditionary force. To fulfill his vision of an elite force, Haldane organized the existing regiments into six infantry divisions and one cavalry division each with organic reserve and territorial units.[43] This did not disrupt Cardwell's localization and recruiting scheme but overlayed a modern command structure in which regiments functioned similar to brigades over their battalions rather than as administrative units. The force, which would become the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) would become 170,000 strong and able to function for up to six months on an extended 130-mile supply line, constraints consistent with limited British continental aims.

Additionally, he continued the trend of centralizing War Office power by creating a full general staff to better manage Army affairs.[44] To this he added regular combined arms exercises under the watchful eye of General Douglas Haig. The result of these reforms was that by 1911, with only £27 million to devote to his initiatives over almost a decade, Haldane had built an army able to field more than 650,000 well-equipped, well-trained soldiers. This compared favorably to the Boer War maximum of less than 593,000 soldiers of whom large proportions were poorly trained and equipped.[45]

Britian Takes Haldane's Army to War

Haldane had endowed Britain with a skilled and well-organized BEF fighting force. This system retained regimental loyalty while harnessing it to a modern divisional command structure and general staff. While the BEF's military effectiveness is beyond the scope of this study, it is germane to examine the regimental system's effects on wartime recruiting and reconstitution in three basic but blended phases of the Great War. The study will first evaluate the BEF and Colonial Regiments, which were extant at the time of conflict, then Lord Herbert Kitchener's voluntary recruiting efforts under the New Armies concept and finally the conscripted regiments of 1916 to 1918.

British Expeditionary Force and the Colonial Regiments

The BEF as constituted under the Haldane reforms served exceptionally well during the opening months of the Great War. In the first two weeks of conflict in 1914, this organized and effective force deployed 100,000 soldiers to Belgium in just two weeks to help blunt the initial Ger-

man offensive.[46] These regiments and their regular divisions counterparts assigned to colonial duty were a finite resource; the final division composed of colonial garrison troops arrived in France in September 1915.[47] During the 1914 and 1915 period, these well-trained units suffered significant attrition and were not brought up to strength by activation of their territorial battalions to provide individual replacements.

Instead, voluntary recruitment under the New Armies scheme sparked large-scale volunteerism and mass enlistment by ordinary citizens. Field Marshal Herbert Kitchener, who was secretary of state for war, was the primary proponent of this scheme to create new divisions from whole cloth rather than reconstituting the BEF.[48] In fact, draft War Department correspondence dated 9 September 1914 seems to indicate a policy of not directing "K Army" officers toward replenishment of any BEF unit.[49] As a result, the professional BEF soldiers were all put out of action or subsumed into New Army units by late 1915.[50] By the time of the Somme in 1916, only a few battalions of well-trained BEF and regular colonial divisions remained to face what would be the major test of the New Army regiments.[51]

The New Army Regiments

Kitchener's New Army scheme, which created a national voluntary recruiting mechanism parallel to old-style regimental recruiting, sought to take advantage of the outpouring of volunteers for the war effort after the German invasion of Belgium. This public fervor overwhelmed regimental recruiting stations and required a more organized effort to field LSCO-capable forces. Indeed, a 2 September 1914 memorandum from the Army Council of War Office describes depots congested by recruits awaiting equipment or assignments and requests that all depot commandants send soldiers onward to their battalions even if they did not have complete kit.[52]

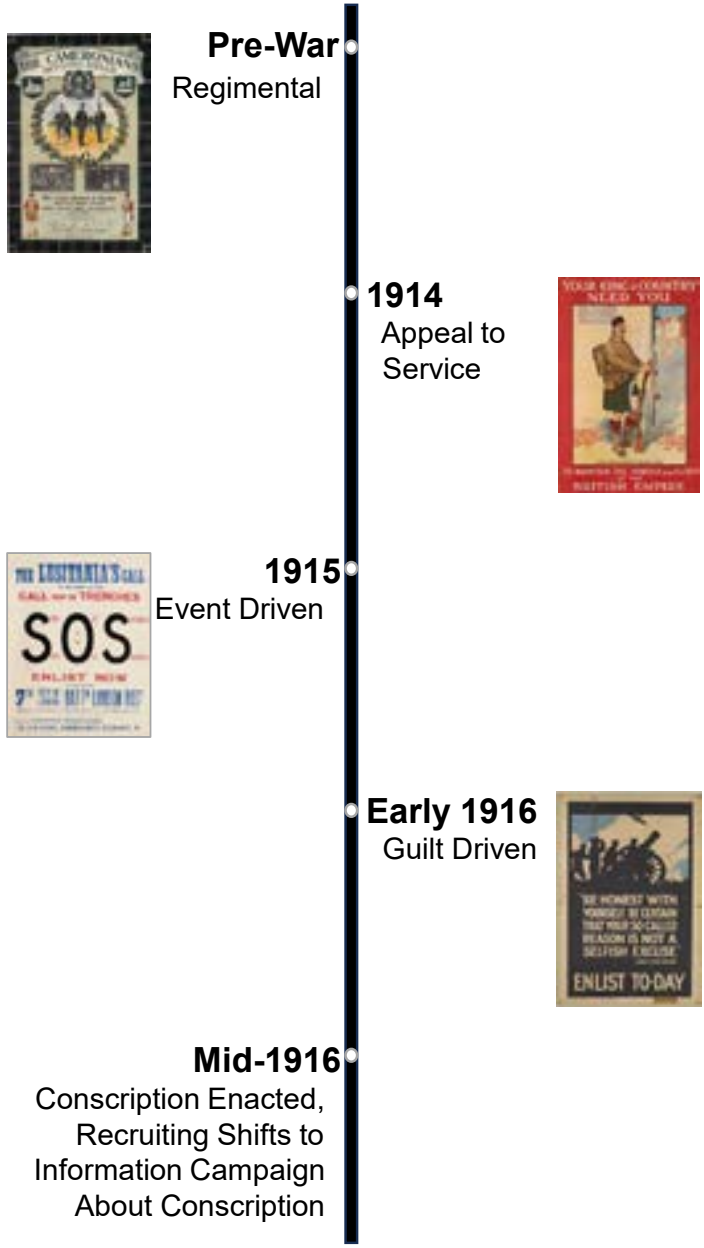
This effort was organized in parallel between regimental recruiting stations (constituting about one third of all recruits) and New Army recruiting stations. The regimental stations recruited under their various regiments and placed soldiers into existing battalions. To the initial seven BEF divisions and their associated existing battalions, the rush of voluntary recruitment under the Kitchener Armies added nearly two million soldiers at the outbreak of war. These "New Armies" were formed by royal warrant and codified in General Order Number 3077 on 21 August 1914. Providing for the creation of six divisions, it also contained training appendices and tables of allowance for equipping, essentially creating from whole cloth a parallel army to the BEF.[53]

Figure 4.8. Volunteers outside a London Recruiting Office, August 1914.

Source: National Army Museum, "Volunteers outside a London Recruiting Office," 1978-11-157-22-18, August 1914, National Army Museum Study Collection, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1978-11-157-22-18.

As part of their parallel nature, the New Armies did not send individual replacements to BEF units but instead added battalions to expand existing regiments. By the period from 1916 to 1917, many regiments had expanded to more than forty battalions from a peacetime norm of two to four.[54] By the war's close, some regiments had nearly 50,000 men and could have easily manned a modern infantry division with their effective strength alone. Clearly, the regimental system provided a useful structure for amplifying a small professional army into a large-scale combat force, which by war's end would have more than 3.5 million soldiers under arms.

The continued application of regimental nomenclature, therefore, appears to be more a recognition of the regimental system's administrative benefits in amplifying LSCO recruiting and reconstitution efforts than providing morale or recruiting benefits. Indeed, 1914 to 1918 recruitment posters from the United Kingdom Army Archives show a distinct lack of regimental fervor after 1914. Regimental affiliation



Graphics From: National Army Museum, "The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 1914;" "Your King & Country Need You, 1914;" "The Lusitania's Call, 1915," and "Be Honest with Yourself," National Army

Figure 4.9. Timeline of Recruiting Poster Themes.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

during the war went from secondary to entirely absent in recruiting posters. Subsequent posters range from topical in the early years (e.g. "Remember Belgium" or "The Lusitania's Last Call"), to service-oriented (e.g. "Do your duty," "Kitchener's Call"), to just reiterating the 1916 Military Service Act (which required service) instead of appealing to a higher calling.

In a large-scale combat environment, the value of a regimental system could be replicated by any organized system for the administration, equipping, and training of soldiers. The regimental system initially had some distinct advantages in this regard. While the New Army operated as above, and utilized specialized training battalions sourced from 4th Army (which had been converted into a training Army), locally raised regiments operated as a self-replicating force structure. These regiments were ordered after their formation to stand up additional Reserve or Regular battalions before heading to the front. For example, the 1st of the 8th London rifles went to war in 1915, leaving the 2nd of the 8th behind; these troops, in turn, formed the 3rd of the 8th prior to departing for France in 1917. This arrangement was beneficial logistically (using existing depots), but also helped inculcate regimental identity.

As battalions were rendered combat ineffective, they were disbanded and remaining soldiers were sent to sister battalions. So when the 1st of the 8th London rifles was disbanded as severely understrength, remaining soldiers went to the 2nd and 3rd London rifles. This seeding of regimental culture is evident in 1st of the 8th commander remarks: "Their history and the history of those who had gone before them was the true history of the battalion."[55] This ongoing cohesion in the face of incredible attrition supports a role for regimental culture and history as part of the equation. A question remains, however, about how to explain the significant number of conscript battalions that won battle honors and maintained cohesion equal to their professional BEF forbears.[56]

Conscript Regiments

By mid-1915, War Department correspondence from Lord Kitchener shows that slowing voluntary recruiting was a major concern.[57] Kitchener together with Director of General Recruiting Edward Stanley, 17th earl of Derby, introduced the "Derby Scheme." This half-measure required men aged 18 to 41 to attest publicly that they would enlist immediately or enlist when their "group" was called up. Any men who chose to wait for their group would drill and train on a voluntary basis.[58] By the end of 1915, however, this scheme was not bringing the requisite number of recruits; only 318,553 medically fit single men were recruited.[59]

Despite deeply rooted British aversion to conscript armies, Britain needed soldiers and so instituted conscription for all single men 18 to 41 in January 1916.[60] Married men and those in key professions were excluded and until 1918, soldiers under 19 were placed on home duty until they were of age.[61] The first six months of conscription, however, netted only 50,000 men; as a result, conscription was extended to married men in May 1916 and for the duration of the war.[62] War Office documents show that in the first quarter of 1916, voluntary enlistment and conscription netted only 211,690 recruits.[63] With a shortfall of 281,000 recruits projected by mid-1916 and estimated static wastage in the infantry of 74 percent per anum, conscripts were critically necessary. These War Office figures prefigure static trench warfare and the upcoming pitched battle at the Somme, which would result in more than 400,000 British Army casualties.

Following the Somme, often known as the graveyard of the New Army, the British Forces desperately needed reinforcement, which came in the form of conscript soldiers. By this time, the system of battalions and their overarching regiments was often confused, and soldiers were attached to units to which they had no particular affiliation. The regimental system had all but disappeared, and conscript soldiers were marched up to the front and thrown into the fray with little preparation or training.[64] Despite this, newly arrived soldiers facing repeated German attacks quickly developed loyalty to each other and their units without regard for regimental specifics.[65] This more atavistic "foxhole spirit" carried the day for the remainder of the conflict; by this time, the Army was largely made up of conscripts. As the Army emerged from the war, the regimental system would reassert itself and adopt these conscript battalions in ways that would enhance cohesion and recruiting.

As the Great War concluded and the British Army began to demobilize, the regimental system again returned to the fore. Though described as "separate tribes" by Williamson Murray and Peter R. Mansoor, these tribes now possessed a bond of shared experience.[66] This bond was amplified by the societal leveling effect of a large-scale conscript-based Army organized along modern lines for large-scale conflict. Far from forgetting their traditions, the regiments of the interwar period updated them, included new histories, and often featured the exploits of their conscript battalions over those of older lineage. The Manchester Regiment, for instance, though of proud lineage often celebrates its 16th (conscript) battalion's exploits.[67] On the opposite end of the spectrum, some Regular Army units that were nearly obliterated during the war preserved the history of their unit's valiant efforts after they were reconstituted. The 2nd Devons, for ex-

ample, were nearly wiped out in a rear-guard reverse slope defense at Bois du Buttes, suffering more than 670 casualties. Despite this, the reconstituted battalion proudly commemorated the action by wearing the *Croix de Guerre* (French: War Cross).[68] The resilience, flexibility, and institutional memory in adapting to unthinkable levels of attrition spotlight an enduring strength of the regimental system: "continuity."

Continuity is the overriding benefit of long service with the same unit or cohort. Under this heading, the regimental system excelled in three broad areas. First, it was able to preserve the unique identity of each unit despite amalgamation, near-obliteration, and unit function changes. These identities and histories provide an additional cultural criterion for recruiting. Locating within communities kept the military in the public eye and built pride around local units, though this did not necessarily help boost recruiting. Second, as service conditions improved and terms of service shortened, the army was able to maintain retention levels in the face of competitive pressures from a booming labor market. This retention buffered recruiting difficulties and maintained a level of professional training and cultural focus necessary for colonial service. Finally, though not measurable, the esprit de corps within these regimental formations helped them survive hardship, poor leadership, and battle—emerging stronger on the other side. More than this, the regimental system combined the above to anneal the foxhole esprit of necessity with regimental traditions to propagate a culture of victory, even when war was not looming.

Effectiveness of British Regimental System Recruiting

The effectiveness of the regimental system's recruiting efforts from the Cardwell through Haldane reforms is inextricably linked to the economic events of that time, including the Long Depression (1873 to 1896). Recruitment, however, certainly did not keep up with or exceed population growth. While the population of males 15 to 24 in Britain grew from 2,523,100 in 1859 to 3,973,200 in 1901 (57.5 percent), army recruitment during that time grew by only 45 percent.[69] This represented a proportional drop in recruiting from 1.1 percent in 1859 to 1.0 percent in 1901. These numbers did not, at least physically, represent an increased selectivity in recruiting. In fact, the Army had to reduce recruiting standards year over year from 1861 through 1900. Meanwhile, wastage erased any recruiting gains due to short service. From 1876 onward, this would result in nearly double the number of discharges over the next twenty-two years.[70]

While reduced height might be a benefit in a trench fifteen years hence, the reduction in requirements demonstrated an overall inability to

attract quality recruits in an era where the average 21-year-old male was 5'6" between 1896 and 1900.[71] Despite these reductions, an 1892 Inspector General Report included significant shortfalls, finding that "special enlistments," the modern equivalent of US Army recruitment waivers, made up a surprising 32 percent of all enlistments.

To contextualize this data, the average height of men by birth age in Britain declined precipitously from 5'7" in 1810 to 5'5" by 1850.[72] Men born in 1850 would have been recruited in 1868 to 1871 as the Cardwell reforms came into effect. The height requirements reductions reflected a shorter population in general and an adjustment of army requirements to match—"cutting one's cloth to suit one's purse," as the leaders of the day might have said. As heights increased by the 1890s, the nation was also emerging from the Long Depression. Facing increased economic competition for labor, the Army had to settle for less-than-ideal recruits in a tight labor market similar to what the US Army faces today.

A review of its expenditures from 1882 to 1890 shows the Army expanded from 132,905 soldiers in the 1882 to 1883 Fiscal Year, to 152,282 soldiers by 1890, a period of sustained growth driven largely by recruitment of enlisted soldiers.[73] Even more interesting, this was despite relative fiscal austerity as the nation was gripped by the Long Depression from 1873 to 1896.[74] In fact, the Army reduced the number of soldiers on paid recruiting duty by 14 percent—from 160 in 1887 to 138 in 1890.[75] The annual Army budget grew by only 2 percent between 1882 and 1890; because of deflationary pressures, however, the pound actually went further in 1890 than it did in 1882.[76] Though there are complex economic factors at play, recruiting under the regimental system did grow the Army by nearly 15 percent in less than a decade during a period of relative budgetary austerity.

The Cardwell, Childers, and Haldane reforms were all intended to bring in higher quality soldiers. While this may not have been the case when comparing soldier height, there were other indicators that these reforms effectively improving soldier performance after recruitment. In terms of soldier delinquency, fines for drunkenness had been in steady decline and in 1889 reached their lowest ebb in thirty years.[77] This suggests that soldiers were more satisfied with the environment and less likely to seek refuge in drink.

Indeed, soldiers were more likely than ever before to benefit from Army educational programs. From 1882 to 1890, the Army increased its education budget by 10 percent and in 1886 introduced language proficiency bonuses.[78] These changes reflect a strategy of growing soldiers—a

direction that the US Army currently embraces with its Future Soldier Preparatory Course and emphasis on educational opportunities.[79] For the British Army of the day, this education-related focus reflected the convictions of its leaders, summed up in the words of Lieutenant General Archibald Hunter: "Intellect and physique march side by side; the development of the brain and the development of the body generally go together."[80] This maxim would be put to the test in the arid steppes of the Transvaal during the Second Boer War.

The British Army expanded to meet the challenge of the Second Boer War by activating territorial units and, by war's end in 1902, had a regular end strength of 380,000. As Lord Haldane began the reforms discussed previously, however, large changes were on the horizon.[81] From 1901 until the Great War recruitment goals were met, but this was only because those requirements were drastically reduced in scope. Recruiting efforts were no more successful than before and continued to be hotly debated. Indeed by 1909, the House of Lords held open debate on conscription.[82] Subsequently, the War Office was again forced to lower its required height for recruits, likely as recruiting difficulties continued apace.[83] By the outbreak of the Great War, however, the Army—now reorganized as a BEF striking force—numbered 247,000.[84]

Interestingly, regimental recruiting appears to have hit a lull during this period; an archival search for recruiting posters 1895 to 1913 in the Templer Archive returns only ten examples. Of these, fully half are for territorial, militia, or volunteer regiments rather than regulars. Of the remainder, only two are for regular infantry units while the others are for specialty corps such as Artillery or Engineers. Either regimental recruiting posters did not survive at the same rate as other contemporaneous artifacts, or regimental recruiting was not conducted on a large scale.

With the outbreak of the Great War, recruiting was conducted through parallel regimental and national systems; however as the war went on, national conscription effectively replaced any regimental recruiting. Recruiting in this setting did not bear significant regimental character once national recruiting and conscription took hold. During the period after the Great War, the United Kingdom National Archive system demonstrates a paucity of national level discussion on recruiting. The only documents which reflect national level concern about recruiting between 1919 and 1934 are treatises on the dental and educational standards of recruits, both published in 1927.[85] These documents may offer some insight into the inferior physical quality of recruits who sought Army service in the inter-war years. Be-

yond that, no serious discussion occurs until a 1934 or 1935 Labour Office memorandum regarding measures to intensify Army recruiting.[86]

Regimental recruiting, on the other hand, appears to have gained significant energy compared to the pre-war period. A search of the Templer Archive for "recruiting poster" from 1919 to 1937, an 18-year period similar to the pre-war search, identified nearly three times as many recruiting posters.[87] Of these twenty-eight, only four are for territorial units and seventeen for Infantry or Cavalry regiments. The remainder are general recruiting calls or for specialized support units, which supports the idea that regimental recruiting varies in intensity with national trends.

In the final analysis, regimental recruiting is complementary to national level recruiting. When national-level political power focuses on military recruitment, regiments saw less need to recruit. When the nation's attention was focused elsewhere, regimental recruiters stepped up to bring in recruits and buffer an otherwise unfavorable recruiting environment. In this capacity, regimental recruiting provided diverse recruiting approaches tailored to specific target groups by those who knew them best. Meanwhile, national recruiting continued to pursue initiatives with broad appeal. If the US Army were to pursue this complementary approach, it would reach different demographics through different methods. A dual-track recruiting effort would address the knowledge, identity, and trust gaps that the US Army faces today.

Retention, Reconstitution, Ancillary Benefits, and Noted Drawbacks

Contemporaneous sources show there was significant concern about retention under the short service system. Lord Frederick Roberts, who was born in India and served across the empire from 1851 to 1904, wrote:

> Many a man who would like to remain in the Army and might be invaluable as a noncommissioned officer is deterred by the fear of some new Warrant (regulation), materially affecting his future, being unexpectedly issued, and so hesitates to accept his stripes or prolong his service. He remains in an unsettled state until someday a petty punishment or whim makes him desert, or determine to leave the Army as soon as his first period of service is up.[88]

Roberts's comment reflects more than just a concern for the publishing of Royal Warrants, which rank-and-file soldiers likely did not read. These first-term enlistees, however, did sense the instability intro-

duced into their lives by top-down changes, transient recruiting crises, and increased operational tempo that unbalanced the home/away battalion system. A soldier who joined up in 1878, for instance, would have been required to be at least 5'6" and received no signing bonus. Three years into his seven-year term of service, that soldier was surrounded by young recruits who met the new 5'4" standard and received one of many bonuses given to enlistees in 1881.[89] Simultaneously, the 1878 soldier, now required to support an unbalanced force, might be separated from his home battalion to fill regimental drafts in a linked battalion abroad. He would arrive among strangers and would have to build his reputation all over again. This inherent instability in a peacetime army made retention difficult for all but the most dedicated or destitute. This is borne out by records, which show short service did not materially affect retention. Retention rates under the system of twelve-year terms varied, with between 1.1 percent and 1.9 percent of the total force reenlisting for a second term. Under short (seven-year term) service, retention rates varied between 0.8 percent and 1.4 percent between 1879 and 1898.[90]

These retention trends reflect a fundamental disconnect between what regimental system promises and the realities and pressures of national policy. Regimental recruiting emphasized sport, leisure, and adventure as well as a built-in cohort of friends and peers. Soon after its inception, the inelastic Cardwell and Childers linking system became unbalanced by unforecasted overseas commitments. As the system drifted further from its balanced state, it increasingly failed to provide stability for soldiers, putting additional strain on the military experience. Soldiers were pulled from home battalions to bring overseas battalions up to strength. In turn, the Army had to give bonuses to soldiers who volunteered to extend their service abroad rather than return home. Many soldiers who returned home and shared their unenviable experiences with their fellows chose not to reenlist. In 1891, for example, the government was forced to again turn to bonuses to provide required numbers to effectively defend the colonies.

This cycle of instability in some way mirrors the US Army's own optempo issues during the Iraq and Afghanistan surges. The Army committed to unsustainable conditions to gain a decisive advantage. Like the British Army in the period under study, the United States has global commitments which require Army presence. There are times when soldiers must go abroad to meet those commitments. Unlike the ideal regimental system however, the US Army requires soldiers to uproot themselves every three years and PCS. This dislocation, which was also acutely felt under the unbalanced regimental system, is a key barrier to retention today.

Despite currently exceeding its retention goals, the Army would be wise to examine who choose to leave service. Knowledge and identity gaps created as these former soldiers transition back into the civilian population will affect the Army's long-term recruiting prospects. Those soldiers left service for a reason, and that reason will affect how they portray their experience and influence potential recruits. This is perhaps best expressed again in the words of Lord Roberts:

> The would-be soldier of the present day cannot suit his fancy or convenience in any of these particulars, and instead of being able to settle down in some corps and make it his home, he must be prepared to join a strange battalion . . . with as perfect equanimity as if he had no more feeling than a bale of goods. He finds himself suddenly separated from his friends and acquaintances and being thrown amongst an entirely new set of men, has, so to speak, to begin the world over again. He arrives as a stranger; his former efforts to raise himself in the estimation of his superiors are lost; his capabilities are unknown. . . . He becomes discontented and indifferent as to how he puts in his time, and when remonstrated with, replies, 'Oh! I'm only for six years, what does it matter? What do I care whether the battalion is considered smart or not; when it goes home, I shall be handed over again with the barrack furniture.'[91]

The death of aspiration evident in this quote is a key element of a system which creates a gap between what is promised to recruits and what is delivered. This violation of trust is compounded by various slights and annoyances until the soldier's only goal is to serve out remaining time while putting forth as little effort as possible. Such slights and institutionalized barriers are part and parcel of an organization as large as the Army. Indeed, today's US Army is far less hierarchical, is more flexible, and employs less draconian discipline than the British Army of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the modern US Army, however, any slight is amplified by social media sites such as "US Army WTF Moments" that broadcast details about poor treatment of a soldier.[92] While such tools may have outsized effects, they are a symptom and not the problem. Instead of being targeted, they should be embraced as indicators and change agents—an unofficial channel to help recognize and discourage bad behavior. Underlying these small, individual slights are life-altering stressors such as PCS and deployments, which unnecessarily add uncertainty for soldiers.

The BRS possessed a largely unrealized potential for retention. When balanced immediately following the Cardwell reforms, the Army saw quite

high reenlistment rates—between 1.8 percent and 3.7 percent of the total force between 1870 and 1876. Stability, predictability, and trust are again factors which come to the fore in retention. The US Army has far more competitive pay and benefits than the British Army of 1868 to 1919—and a much more robust and flexible force structure given its divisional organization. Indeed, much of the stress that causes retention issues for the US Army is self-inflicted. Recalling the top five reasons to leave the Army from the DACES Survey (Figure 2.14 on page 22); "all five" are related to stability. Implementation of regimental affiliation at a division level would improve stability for soldiers and their families and significantly increase retention. Increased retention will help the Army weather lean years in recruiting.

Reconstitution—Force Generation in Large-Scale Combat Operations

The BRS also helped with reconstitution and force generation. As late as 1906 when the Haldane reforms were being formulated and implemented, concern about the imbalanced regimental linking system was still at the fore. The nature of the linked battalion system led General Miles and others to consider a system of eight battalions linked under a single regiment, allowing five to remain abroad, while three remained home in depot then rotated out to deploy in sequence.[93] This is almost a proto-divisional concept which would have been regionally aligned against specific geographic areas. The US Army recently shifted to a similar construct in its Regionally Aligned Forces Model, which provided marked benefits for security cooperation missions abroad.[94] The rotational nature of the battalions under Miles's eight-fold linking scheme is also reminiscent of the Regionally Aligned Readiness Modernization Model, which helps ensure a predictable, sustainable cycle of deployment, recovery, modernization, and training.[95] Because of tensions on the continent, however, the Haldane reforms instead focused on creating expeditionary divisions for use in a continental war, rather than the rotational forces envisaged above. Despite the limited nature of the expeditionary force, this entrenched the regimental structure's role in amplifying the military at war a decade later.

The BEF regiments and their territorial battalions all provided a framework for rapidly expanding the Army during large-scale conflicts. As noted above, some regiments expanded to more than forty battalions during the Great War. These battalions typically were not trained at regimental depots, but through a national system of voluntary recruitment and eventually conscription. Thus, while regiments provided the framework, they did not provide the experience and training. If WWII is an exemplar, the US Army

likely would follow a similar process during a large-scale conflict. Prior to that conflict, the United States instituted a peacetime draft, registering more than 16 million men and ensuring preparation for the looming conflict.[96] Given the small standing US Army in the lead-up to the war, however, many divisions sent to fight in Europe had to be created from whole cloth, leading to a bloody learning curve as they entered combat.

Very similarly, the British used large-scale training armies in the Great War to quickly assemble and train their New Army units to basic competence. Conversely, the BEF units fought quite well in the opening year of the Great War but failed to bring those lessons home, suffering attrition to the point of non-existence. By the time the New Armies arrived at the Somme, there were few veterans to train or lead them. This resulted in their wholesale slaughter in attritional trench warfare. British military historian Michael Howard describes this as a doctrinal deficiency; however, training is likely to be just as important to the future fight. Any large-scale war that the US Army is likely to fight in the future will require training and education far beyond basic infantry tactics.[97] Volunteer and conscript soldiers alike will be more effective in LSCO if they are trained and commanded by experienced leaders. In this sense, applying regimental affiliation at a division level might offer both structural and training benefits for force generation and reconstitution.

For instance, each regiment under Haldane's system had its associated Active Service battalions, territorial battalions, and home defense forces. In the US Army, an equivalent arrangement at the divisional level would see a division train with associated Reserve and National Guard brigades as well as mobility and support elements. In full-mobilization LSCO, Reserve and National Guard brigades would provide key support elements. This was embodied in the roundout brigade concept, which phased Reserve brigades into active-duty divisions. These brigades were both a cost saving and force amplification measure designed for LSCO that required full mobilization of national might.[98] Thus when the time came for a more limited conflict in Iraq in 1990, they were kept home in favor of higher proficiency Active units from other divisions.[99] The BEF, by contrast, activated all territorial battalions of each regiment at the outset of the Great War, and these served as a crucial second echelon during the period 1915 to 1916 as the New Armies were trained and mobilized. More recently the National Guard revived a similar concept in the form of the "associated unit" pilot program, which met with some success in training and readiness but significantly increased costs in training hours.[100] Application of these regimental principles at a division level would prepare the

US Army to sustain conflict in a LSCO environment, maintain a credible second echelon, and provide experienced trainers and leaders for force generation at home.

The final way in which the post-Cardwell regimental system provided force generation capabilities was inherent in the terms of service offered to soldiers. All soldiers who signed up for seven years with the colours also agreed to serve in the Reserve for five years after they left Active Duty. Unlike the US Army, where most soldiers transition to the inactive Ready Reserve, BEF service would have been with an actively drilling unit. The effect of these changes saw Britain's militia grow by 27 percent from 1882 to 1890, while Army Reserve participation more than doubled.[101] The overall effect was to keep recently discharged soldiers at a moderate skill level and available for recall. It also pushed knowledge of the military out into the community as these reservists worked at their day-to-day jobs and interacted with the public. Reservist Frank Richards commented about this continued martial feeling after taking his discharge before the Great War:

> Every quarter-day, or pension-day as it was called, a number of us reservists and service-pension-wallahs would have a day off from our work to spend it together. . . . By stop-tap most of us had said what utter fools we had been to leave the Service and that if we had our time over again, we would not leave the Army until we were damned well kicked out of it.[102]

This interaction of Reservists with the public likely was a contributor to the massive groundswell of volunteers that Britain mobilized for war in late 1914.

Finally, while the BRS had little bearing on wartime reconstitution, it provided an ethos for wartime flexibility and a framework for peacetime reconstitution. During the Great War, for instance, soldiers from units that became combat ineffective and were taken out of the line were then rapidly integrated with other regiments and under threat of German attack; they quickly set aside regimental affiliation to form new cohesive units.[103] The regiments themselves did not provide a framework for wartime reconstitution but instead a common ethos to fight on. In this sense, the regimental spirit was carried by "those in the battalion who made its history and however heavy the casualties, there would always be some survivors to pass the torch."[104] Survivors were seen to "act as the repository for what had gone on before."[105] As the regiments transitioned from war to peacetime, the old structures reasserted themselves and units like the 2nd

Devons, nearly obliterated during the war, were reconstituted. These newly reconstituted units often touted the achievements of their most storied battalions, be they territorial or conscript, over those of their more lineally senior battalions. Thus, the torch bearers who came home from war shaped the culture of the regiment and that culture, in turn, shaped the men who would fight the next war.

Reconstitution of units under the moniker of a known, revered, and effective formation provided several internal and external advantages when the nation again went to war. Internally, expansion of units recognized for LSCO provides ready-made unit pride, allows intermingling of experienced and raw soldiers, and minimizes apparent losses to the public. Externally, the reputation of these units has its own advantages against known adversaries. To take a modern example, People's Liberation Army leaders were concerned about Chinese soldiers who had not experienced major conflict since the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war, which was not a resounding victory.[106] Independent of the unit's composition itself, these inexperienced soldiers might be intimidated when facing a well-known adversary like the 101st or 82nd Airborne—even in an attritional conflict. The stability of regimental elements applied at the division level will enable transmission of unit culture in peacetime and during post-war reconstitution. As these regiments were demobilized, exploits of their most courageous soldiers and battalions were taken into the history of the regiment, serving as exemplars for the next generation of soldiers.

The BRS was not without its drawbacks, however. The system was highly inelastic when implemented at the level of the regiment, equivalent to a brigade in today's Army. After the Cardwell reforms, the linked battalion concept almost immediately became unbalanced by colonial requirements. This was made worse by the Second Boer War and only remedied under the Haldane reforms when the BEF was organized. These increased stresses inhibited some system benefits such as stability and cohorting. Without the predictability or at least longevity with the unit, retention and recruiting suffered.

The system also enabled a sort of "gentlemanly amateurism" that has little place in modern warfare.[107] It often created micro-cultures which were inimical to effective change and learning. Chief among these was a resistance to information sharing and analysis noted across regiments in the Great War.[108] The resulting lack of a "lessons learned" culture is evident in the interwar years when the British failed to study the Great War until 1932. Even then Field Marshal Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, chief of the Imperial General Staff, only released a heavily edited version

of the study because he felt it was too critical of the Army.[109] This inertia often left regiments out of step with times culturally and technologically.

Many senior military officers resisted the Cardwell reforms. As a result, British leaders Hugh Oakeley Arnold-Forster and St. John Brodrick were unable to bring about the reforms which Haldane eventually managed. This carried over to the cultural realm in the early years of the regimental system and even up to WWII. One Armor commander wrote in 1939:

> I had the cavalry CO's in and laid my cards on the table. They are such nice chaps socially. That's what makes it so difficult. But they're so conservative of their spurs and swords and regimental tradition, etc., and so certain that the good old Umpteenth will be all right . . . , so easily satisfied with an excuse if things aren't right, so prone to blame the machine or machinery . . . it's so hard to get anything more into them or any more work out of them.[110]

The tradition of gentlemanly amateurism combined with cultural and technological inertia laid the groundwork for a dark opening chapter in WWII. Budgetary constraints and the public's general revulsion after the horrors of the Great War certainly played their part; however, the system's cultural aspects prevented efficient use of remaining resources. Often this led to regiments muddling through to success in spite of their leaders rather than because of them. Despite this, the benefits noted above provided fertile ground to draw principles from the BRS which, when applied at higher echelons, helped avoid some pitfalls. Those which cannot be avoided may instead be mitigated by America's uniquely egalitarian culture or actively redirected along more useful lines.

Analyzing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Although adopting a nineteenth century system in a twenty-first century Army would not be advisable, lessons can be drawn from the BRS—how it failed and succeeded, and how the external environment shaped its effectiveness. The US Army may be able to glean ideas which can be adopted to augment its strengths or mitigate weaknesses. The underlying strengths of the British system were primarily stability, connection to community, and facility for cultural transmission. These enabled improved retention (when not unbalanced), secondary pathways for recruitment, and benefits to force generation and reconstitution. Meanwhile, its weaknesses were primarily linked to parochialism, personnel inflexibility, and lack of a learning culture—challenges which are remarkably similar to those facing the US Army today.

Origin	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Stability—Unit Cohesion Alternate Recruitment Pathway Force Generation—Reconstitution	Parochial—Non-Standard Anti-Intellectual—Anti-Learning Personnel Inflexibility
External	Community Identity High Unemployment (until 1896) Broad National Support (post-1902)	Poor Physical Health of Recruits Operational Tempo—Budget Low Unemployment (after 1896)

Figure 4.10. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis of British Regimental System 1868 to 1919.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

Origin	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Pay/Benefits Sense of Purpose Professional Culture	Lack of Stability Insufficient Manning Poor LSCO Generation-Reconstitution
External	Military Influencers (Family) Broad National Support Large Budget	Trust-Knowledge-Identity Gaps Poor Physical Health of Recruits Low Unemployment

Figure 4.11. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis of Present-Day US Army.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

Both armies faced periods of relatively high unemployment followed by long periods of record low unemployment. They suffered from the population's declining health and physical capacity, reflected in changes to recruiting standards. Finally, public perception was a challenge in both cases. Given these similar environments, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis can help identify potential solutions to the US Army's present-day recruiting woes. First, however, it is important to refocus this analysis using the three gaps identified by General James C. McConville, chief of staff of the Army: knowledge, identity, and trust. This will help align specific regimental elements against gaps and generate actionable solutions for Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy analysis and change.

		British Regimental System		
		Strengths Stability/Unit Cohesion Alternate Recruitment Pathway Force Generation/ Reconstitution	**Weaknesses** Parochial/Non-Standard Anti-Intellectual/ Anti-Learning Personnel Inflexibility	
US ARMY	**Strengths** Pay/Benefits Sense of Purpose Corporateness	**Win Big** Reduce or eliminate the PCS requirement will promote development of unit culture, leverage stability for retention, and provide a pool of regionally aligned technical and cultural expertise	**Risks** Personnel Inflexibility Parochialism/ Nonstandard Anti-Learning	**Mitigation** Incentivize key positions Broaden assignments PME, Lessons Learned
	Weaknesses Lack of Stability Insufficient Manning Poor LSCO Generation/ Reconstitution	**Improve Weakness** Divisions will be incentivized to actively field recruiting teams and engage with the public to recruit for their unit. Increased stability will improve family outcomes, build experienced reserve, ease transitions between components, and ensure most of those discharged share favorable experiences with their communities, broadening the pool of recruits	**Failure** Leader violation of public trust Unit complacency Cohesion hinders incorporation of new soldiers	**Mitigations** Athena, BCAP, CCAP Broadening/ Multi-Unit Training Actively manage culture to match soldiers

Figure 4.12. Comparison of British Regimental and US Army Strengths with Suggested Solutions, Risks, Failure Modes, and Mitigations.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

Suitability of Regimental System Elements for Recruiting: General McConville's Three Gaps

The British Regimental System as it existed from 1868 to 1919 offers recruiting insights for a professional, globally committed Army transitioning between periods of small wars, peace, and large-scale conflict. The British system regionally aligned units, built community connections, and ensured stability for soldiers throughout their careers.[111] Soldiers could expect to remain with their chosen regiment until the rank of lieutenant colonel and developed a close connection to the members of their unit that served them well on the battlefield.[112] Under Cardwell-Childers, the regiment put down roots in the community and built a skilled reserve. Under Haldane, territorial battalions aligned under professional Active Duty regiments in a modern striking force. Returning to McConville's assessment of a modern US Army facing knowledge, identity, and trust gaps, these reforms represent insights rather than prescriptions. They can help identify the right questions to ask, promote a stable and sustainable peacetime Army, and start the long process of reengagement with American citizens.

Lessons from the regimental system, like most lessons learned in studying history, are not those of rote emulation. The system was flawed in many ways: valued connections over merit, was wholly unsuitable for large-scale conflict prior to the Haldane reforms, and failed to overcome economic macro-trends in the recruiting environment. It did, however, build community connection as well as esprit de corps, and serve as a platform for preserving unit culture and knowledge between conflicts. Rather than asking how the BEF approach might fit into the US Army force structure, better to consider inherent qualities of the regimental system that might be worth emulating. In the context of the three gaps lens, these are connection to community, stability, and a sense of belonging. Each corresponds to a specific gap and is a quality inherent within the latter-day British Regimental System.

Connection to community is directly related to trust and is the substrate for solving knowledge and identity gaps. The BRS, while recruiting at a national scale, linked depots and regimental recruiting territories to communities. While this did not improve recruiting in the face of socio-economic macro-trends, the approach did keep the regiments in the public eye and helped increase the pool of future recruits. This can be seen in everything from young adult literature to toys; between the reforms and the Great War, these cast the Army as a force for moral good in the world.[113] Direct contact with the soldiery, which had been infrequent and

prejudicial prior to the Cardwell reforms, became a source of community pride. Local communities adopted "their" regiments, a trend that likely contributed to the impressive levels of voluntary recruitment at the outset of the Great War.

The US Army, on the other hand, is not often in the public eye outside of National Guard armories and the few (mostly Southern) cities which have large Army bases. Recruiting is carried out from a strip-mall office rather than a local depot, and often by relatively junior officers and non-commissioned officers. In this sense, the US Army is not often on display to the public. Even in towns where bases are located, they are cordoned off from the communities in which they reside. To borrow an aphorism from the political life of our country, "all politics is local;" connecting to the American people to increase knowledge, trust, and identity should be a "local" endeavor.

Similarly, the US Army cannot emulate a battalion-based regimental system when it is structured to fight divisions in LSCO. Nor can it logistically spread each unit evenly across the country to promote community engagement. Luckily, that is not necessary. Just as Britain continues its Keep the Army in the Public Eye program, the United States should do the same on a local level. Bowl game flyovers and parachute jumps might prompt "oohs and ahs" but do not engage prospective recruits in a conversation that builds trust or transmits knowledge. Similarly, while national campaigns like Be All You Can Be are important, conversations in a shopping mall, grocery store, or airport are likely to have more impact.

In the period under study in this book, British soldiers proudly wore their regimental uniforms in the community, even marching to events in impromptu parades. While this approach may not bear repeating today, US soldiers are encouraged implicitly or explicitly to hide their military affiliation. Sometimes this is couched in terms of operational security, or out of concern that uniformed soldiers off post might embarrass their units. The first step in connecting with the community is to be readily identifiable as a soldier. If the US Army cannot trust soldiers to represent it in uniform, the public probably should not trust the Army either. Soldiers should be encouraged to live their daily lives as a representative of their "profession." As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates noted in 2010, "There is a risk over time of developing a cadre of military leaders that politically, culturally, and geographically have less and less in common with the people they have sworn to defend."[114] Indeed, simply requiring soldiers to travel in uniform on official travel would increase their visibility to the American people.

Making soldiers visible in the day-to-day life of American citizens will spark conversations and build a resilient trust that the American people truly know and identify with those who have sworn an oath to protect them.

Another more direct way to improve local connections would be to stand up Divisional Recruiting Teams to augment the limited abilities of US Army Recruiting Command full-time recruiters. While many units are aligned to support recruiting offices in their region, the Army could assign several soldiers to full-time duty recruiting for their division alone. This would incentivize units to build local connections in their assigned regions and develop unit cultures that would help attract potential recruits.

Finally, the US Army should take a page from Haldane's book to expand JROTC and ROTC programs across the country. The first step should be more rigorous standards for those who teach and mentor in this capacity—avoiding trust-destroying incidents of abuse seen in recent headlines. Secondly, the Army should consider linking these programs with the divisional recruiting team concept. Linking an Active Duty unit to each JROTC or ROTC location would provide manpower, resources, and relevant experience to program participants as well as their peers. As an additional benefit, having Active Duty soldiers periodically involved would provide an increased level of oversight, preventing the abuse by program leaders who might erode public trust.[115] Employing soldiers as trustworthy agents would help address the trust and knowledge gaps. The remaining gap is to get prospective recruits to see themselves serving.

In examining Gen Z preferences and the historical structure of the BRS, three key elements come to the fore: stability, mentorship, and belonging. Luckily the Army already has unique advantages in this regard—if it chooses to utilize them. The Army has a nationwide presence and natural team-based structure which stresses mutual support and mentorship. The Army's goal should be to use these innate advantages to fill the identity gap in a way that appeals to Gen Z. Potential recruits today have difficulty seeing themselves belonging to an organization that they perceive would place their lives outside their own control. Tackling this crisis of identity will require questioning some basic assumptions about military service.

The US Army needs to recognize that it is no longer at war. Even when the Army was at war over the past two decades, the nation remained insulated from most effects of the war. Lifestyle is very important to Gen Z. To build an identity that will draw this demographic, the Army should carefully craft a message of agency and purpose, while acknowledging that it is a challenging profession.

The Army's reimagined Be All You Can Be campaign does this well, if in a format which may not appeal to Gen Z due to its length. Stability undergirds any benefit that the regimental system might offer to the US Army, and stability and predictability provide concrete lifestyle benefits to soldiers and their families. These benefits include the social networks and social capital so valued by Gen Z, as well as the ability to effectively utilize concrete military benefits such as Veterans Affairs loans to build wealth through stable home ownership. Additionally, if the strife and churn of constant movement cycles were minimized, deployments would be less arduous and the Army would attract and retain more qualified soldiers.

Most importantly from a martial perspective, stability allows soldiers to build unit culture. In the BRS, this served several purposes. First, units could develop skills and become cohesive, high-performing tactical elements through long practice together. Second, it provided a means to transmit the regiment's accomplishments and implicit culture to new soldiers, indoctrinating them quickly into the existing unified whole. Finally, it created a unique criterion for regiments to recruit directly—a culture based on their accomplishments in battle, sport, or pleasure. Such organizational culture is a key criterion evaluated by Gen Z members looking for meaningful work.

Lack of stability, on the other hand, is a major reason for leaving—or not joining the US Army. This is true directly, but also because of family support network, spouse income, overwork, and shifting requirements. Thus, the key BRS element which the US Army should adopt is stability. Unit cohesion, community association, and a sense of belonging all stem from stability. With improved soldier stability, the US Army can reengage with the American people in ways beyond the superficial, helping to expand the pool of recruits who know, trust, and identify with soldiers.

The Regimental System as a US Army Organizing Principle

Nothing is more a recognized BRS product than the esprit de corps of serving with the same regiment. More than a workplace friendship, this was a product of long association, driven by relationships formed in training and battle.[116] These relationships, with superiors, peers, and subordinates carried soldiers through hardships, poor high-level leadership, and the inevitable horrors of war. Esprit, unit reputation, and traditions provide a competitive advantage across multiple domains. In recruiting, they provide an independent cultural variable which units can enhance and subsequently use to attract recruits. For retention, traditions of long association

provide a cohesive social support network which binds soldiers to their comrades and creates a community of belonging and purpose. This closely matches two of the five most important reasons to stay in the Army from the DACES Survey: sense of purpose, opportunity to lead.[117]

To understand and adapt BRS aspects to the US Army, it is helpful to briefly contrast their basic characteristics. To an extent, the US Army currently suffers from a Ship of Theseus conundrum. First postulated by Plutarch then refined by philosopher John Locke, the concept questions whether an object is the same if all of its parts are eventually replaced.[118] Plutarch uses the ship of Theseus, preserved in Athens by replacing rotten planks as it aged. Locke more prosaically questions whether a sock once patched repeatedly is still the same garment. A uniquely American variant questions whether George Washington's axe was the same axe after its handle and head were replaced. In each case, the question is whether the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Is there a replacement rate at which the ship (or unit) becomes merely a collection of parts, moving in roughly the same direction, rather than a cohesive formation?

Thus, the US Army's missing link today is not the specific regimental structures but the longevity and commitment inherent in the regimental system of Cardwell's day. The reason for this is not territorial affiliation or the lack of regional depots. In most BRS regiments, less than 50 percent of soldiers came from their own recruiting territories; many were moved, amalgamated, or renamed entirely. The primary barrier to building esprit and unit culture in the regimental system was the expectation that soldiers regularly move to advance their careers.

Regular PCSs are robbing the Army of effective leaders, wasting skills, and preventing the development of a worthwhile organizational culture. Today's soldiers PCS every two to four years and are expected to broaden their skillset by moving between heavy/light, praxis/academic, and staff/line jobs as they go. Meanwhile, they take on increasing levels of responsibility, all while developing themselves through professional and military education venues. These policies, which are meant to broaden soldiers and encourage leadership, are applied too broadly and are often counterproductive. Mandatory Army-wide PCS and broadening systems produce generalist soldiers and stunted leaders, at the cost of increased stress on soldiers, families, and units.

The Army, like any organization of such size and scope, relies heavily on leaders at all levels to manage day-to-day operations, address crises, and plan for the future. Army Doctrine Publication 6-22 defines this as

"influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation."[119] Each of these elements involves inherent unknowns. Influencing people is not a science but an art in which no rote process will suffice, no matter how many doctrinal bullet points are added. More than its civilian counterparts, the Army needs leaders capable of acting decisively in ambiguous situations with incomplete information. For the military, comfort with ambiguity is the base level defining trait of leadership. A leader who can tolerate ambiguity, while directing clear roles and responsibilities for subordinates, will motivate strong work performance.[120] This is, in part, why exercising leadership is such a cognitively intense task; a leader must tolerate ambiguity while reducing it for their subordinates.

In combat, small unit leaders need to have the personal gravitas to drive their soldiers through adversity and arrive as a cohesive whole on the objective. In contrast, the most successful organizational leaders heavily rely on subordinates to offload tasks, while subordinates may offload unavoidably ambiguous decisions upward. Successful leadership lauded in case studies is based on commitment, trust, and mutual understanding rather than authority or compliance alone. These relational forms of leadership stem from personal rather than positional power. Though effective, they take time to develop. In the current system of regular PCS moves, time is often at a premium for leaders at all levels. Moreover, leaders must always operate within the cultural framework of the organizations and the units they serve.

Any social unit which has a history will develop a culture.[121] A unit or organization's culture is by its nature deep and inertial. Its shape can be felt around the edges in the form of group norms, artifacts, espoused values, and implicit assumptions.[122] It takes time to understand organizational culture and even longer to change it. In the Army's system of regular personnel churn, it is rare for leaders to do either. In the US Army system of regular PCS assignments, newly arrived leaders usually appreciate only the surface-level cultural implications of certain units or types of units (Scouts Out! Air Assault! Rangers Lead the Way!). They do not have the time to fully understand the underlying aspects of the culture they are attempting to lead. This cultural ambiguity creates another source of cognitive stress for leaders, at times creating misunderstandings, and reinforcing the use of positional power and pace-setting vice commitment-based leadership.

Regular PCS moves impose significant costs on military families. The top five "Extremely Important" reasons to leave the Army identified in the 2021 DACES Survey were family- and stability-related. The av-

erage American moves 11.4 times in their lifetime.[123] Given that the average life expectancy in the US is 76.4 years, this means that a soldier who moves every three years over a twenty-one-year career will move more than twice as often as peers who choose other careers.[124] Moving is a stressful event, ranking third among stressful major life events after death of a loved one and divorce.[125] Indeed, a 2008 National Institutes of Health study found that while a single move had little effect on divorce rates, multiple moves increased the risk of divorce by two and a half times.[126]

Notably, spouses are also four to six times more likely to be unemployed compared to the general population, and their salaries are considerably lower than non-military counterparts.[127] Additional stress from deployments and absences for field exercises has a significant impact on families. Family strife cannot be ignored as a source of stress and ambiguity for Army leaders. Unlike civilian organizations, the family issues of subordinates and soldiers often become a further stressor for organizational leaders. The Army attempts to ensure dependents are cared for and preserve institutional trust by requiring leaders to take more responsibility for their soldiers than any civilian employer ever would. The impacts of instability can radiate up the chain of command, further reducing cognitive bandwidth at operational and strategic levels.

Organizational leadership is the primary form of leadership at these levels. Personnel churn, cultural ambiguity, and family stress impose additional cognitive load on the leader. These stressors reduce a leader's cognitive capacity by adding cognitive tasks that cannot be shared by others as well as ambiguity, resulting in reduced psychological well-being. Faced with so many stressors, individuals become significantly less tolerant of ambiguous situations.[128] This may lead to highly risk-averse leadership styles, organizational paralysis, or increased leader-imposed stress in the pursuit of minute or trivial reductions in ambiguity.

To combat these effects, the Army should emulate the regimental system by reducing or eliminating mandatory PCS while continuing to allow soldiers the opportunity to move every two to four years if they choose. This system would be based on locations with sufficient troop concentrations (division or greater) to allow personnel flexibility within the unit. Such a system would reduce personnel churn, encourage leaders who understand unit culture, and reduce family stress. This would not be an easy shift. Concerns include retention of toxic leaders, inability to fully man unpopular duty stations, and difficulty in finding positions within a division-sized element through which junior leaders could advance. Address-

ing each of these, it becomes clear that the Army already has mechanisms to manage these potential downsides. Leader assessment is a key part of the Army today—embodied in various command assessment programs like the Battalion Command Assessment Program and Colonel's Command Assessment Program as well as non-command programs such as Athena and command climate surveys. These tools could easily be expanded to assess leaders more regularly and provide an oversight function.

Similarly, the Army already struggles with manning the force, missing its FY 2022 recruiting numbers by 15,000.[129] Additionally, the Assignment Interactive Module marketplace allows competitive applicants to match the most coveted postings by implementing civilian best practices in personnel management. This ensures that during each PCS cycle, sought-after postings have a surfeit of applicants while geographically or occupationally less desirable units must do with what is left. Reducing PCS moves would help mitigate this challenge through three mechanisms. First, it would slow the cycle of movement, preventing manning fluctuations from whipsawing personnel levels at less-desirable units. Second, it would preserve institutional knowledge, making all units more effective and reducing the relearning process inherent in PCS moves. Third, it would support unit culture as an independent recruitment variable, offering leaders in less-desirable locations incentives to grow a worthwhile, people-focused culture within their units. This authentic culture would allow divisional recruitment teams to directly market their unit to Gen Z on the cultural variable those prospective recruits are seeking.

A final linked concern is the limited number of leadership roles within a division sized element for a developing soldier. While the number of leadership positions certainly diminish as a soldier becomes more senior within a division, this is not the entire story. Manning issues provide fertile ground to incentivize broadening assignments and opportunities for advancement elsewhere. Some motivators such as brevet promotions and monetary incentives like assignment incentive pay are already in place.[130] Additionally, the Army rates against peers would make advancement more appealing in less-sought-after locations. Most of all, however, the Army should distance itself from up-or-out policies and support soldiers who prefer to remain with a given unit as a technical expert or professional. Taken together, these changes would create an Army Personnel System and culture which favors commitment-based over authority-based positional leadership.

Reduced churn would allow leaders to grow trust and build commitment through personal rather than positional power. Additional time on station, or multiple opportunities to lead within the same division, would prevent culture shock and allow leaders to grow organically in the organizations they will lead. Further, long-term participation in one unit would provide the opportunity to actively guide its development and influence not just the "climate" but the underlying "culture." Reducing cultural ambiguity also would create a ready-built system of trust and commitment in which new soldiers could be educated.

Finally, reducing PCS would improve soldier and leader well-being through reduced family strife. Spouses could develop stable work arrangements and earn salaries comparable to their civilian counterparts. Children would not suffer the psychosocial effects of regular dislocation. Also, social support networks would help families weather deployments with much less psychological and financial difficulty.[131] Emulating this aspect of the regimental system while training to fight in modern conflict would foster visionary leadership and maximum technical proficiency. Such competitive advantages are critical in a world where the US Army uses increasingly complex systems and faces increasingly sophisticated threats.

In a 2023 Association of the US Army speech, General James E. Rainey, chief of Army Futures Command, focused on fighting formations, system-on-system fights, and balancing human machine interfaces as vital components of the future fight.[132] To parallel this analysis, the future fight requires cohesive, well-led formations of professional soldiers trained to expert level in the complex fighting systems they are fielding. Rainey also described a continuum from deterrence to total war during which advanced capabilities become increasingly degraded, exhausted, or irrelevant. With leaders who can tolerate ambiguity, he said, these well-trained and cohesive formations will leverage the intuitive, agile reactions borne of long cooperation and allow the US Army to gain and maintain overmatch as more advanced technology is degraded or depleted.[133]

Once and Future Personnel Practices: Putting the Personal Back in Personnel

While the BEF force structure does not directly parallel the current US Army force structure, the modernization and streamlining process for both is intentional, institutional, and continuous. Speaking at the 2022 Association of the US Army Conference, General McConville commented that fifty-year old personnel management techniques are not suitable

for an Army looking toward the future.[134] To this end, the Army Talent Management Task Force has begun a massive modernization of how the US Army assigns, promotes, and retains talent.[135] Authorized by the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, this task force has been granted additional authorities with regard to soldier assignments, promotions, and direct commissions.[136] As part of the implementation of regimental elements at a division level, this task force should also examine how to better suit service to the soldier while retaining top-tier talent.

Future Army Personnel Management policies need to provide the flexibility to recruit and retain a wider variety of soldiers. In addition to implementing regimental elements as described above to increase stability, the Army should leverage this as an additional recruiting tool. Those attracted by increased stability may be more willing to sign longer contracts or agree to Reserve service after discharge if they are stabilized geographically. This would align personnel to support Regionally Aligned Forces and a Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model. Both programs suffer from the regular churn of personnel across the Army. Stabilizing a significant portion of soldiers help develop a local pool of regional and technical experts.

Personnel impacts would be significant but manageable. The AIM (Assignment Interactive Module) cycle and Army Manning Guidance would need to be adapted to a smaller moving force each year. No-fail manning requirements would need to be managed carefully using a combination of incentives and clearly specified conditions under which a soldier's contractual stability could be broken for a brief period then re-established. Similarly, divisions which are consistently less desirable culturally or geographically might need to be adjusted to include fewer active brigades and more roundout brigades. A system by which overall mission, manning, and recruiting variables could trigger divisions to shift a brigade to roundout status or back to Active status would provide some flexibility in this regard.

Allowing long-service recruits to remain in the same unit would provide stability for soldiers and their families. The stability and predictability provided are in line with Gen Z workforce desires. Geographic stability would also allow soldiers to better take advantage of military benefits like Veteran's Affairs home loans to build a strong, stable financial base. In a military where many younger enlistees with families are forced to rely on food stamps, this would be a boon.[137] Additionally, the Army would require a smaller human resources and logistics infrastructure associated

with a regular PCS cycle. Those personnel would be available for other tasks across the Army. Some soldiers likely would still want to PCS regularly or as suits their needs, and that flexibility should be inherent in the system. Finally, broadening assignments with other divisions or in fixed-facility positions would still be a career progression feature, allowing cross-leveling of ideas between personnel across the force. Overall, the impact to day-to-day operations would be strongly positive.

Opportunities for Quick Wins through Policy

By moving away from mandatory PCS, the Army will create an enviable work environment that makes employees happier, improves work performance, and saves money. Policy implications to adopting this system, though wide-ranging, would not be insurmountable. If PCS were voluntary, the current system of promotion would need to be modified for soldiers who choose to remain in the same location. Current Army promotion metrics are driven by broadening, diverse assignments and a general upward trend rather than consistent dependable performance. Unfortunately, this deprives the Army of a stable backbone of institutional knowledge retained by those who value stability and mastery.

In *Radical Candor*, author Kim Scott describes two positive career trajectories in the business world.[138] The Army rating system incentivizes the Superstar, who follows an exponential trajectory—an ambitious change agent who constantly seeks new opportunities. In contrast, the Rock Star is a force for stability—content in their current role and a source of institutional knowledge. If the Army embraced the home division concept, it would have to make room for both archetypes. This, however, would require policy changes in how the US Army evaluates and promotes soldiers.

For instance, if the forty-nine percent top block continues to be the standard, then high-performing units may under-promote within their ranks. A normalized, adjusted score based on Likert scale methodology—like a US Marine Corps fitness report—would be a more appropriate measure. The Army also may need to create distinct promotion lines which reflect the different career trajectories. The concept that every soldier needs to be a leader should be reexamined and the "up or out" mentality discarded entirely. The Navy is already implementing a similar program to retain naval aviators passed over for command to ensure that their skillsets are not lost.[139] By implementing a personnel policy which offers both stability and flexible career goals, the US Army would attract a much wider range of recruits.

Summary

The US Army would benefit from emulating the stability and community identity inherent in a regimental system. Combined with the corporateness and sense of purpose already inherent in the US Army, this stability would enable a potent combination of grassroots recruiting, improved retention, and preservation of institutional knowledge. If the US Army were to operationalize these changes at a division level, regimental-style stability would help reengage with the American public and build the Army of tomorrow. The US Army must embrace its role in the life of Americans to build deeper community connections through shared culture and traditions. These connections will grow recruiting directly—changes that will pay long-term dividends by bridging the knowledge, identity, and trust gaps.

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Chapter 5
Conclusions and Recommendations: Moving Toward a Home Division Concept

With stability identified as the root of British Regimental System (BRS) beneficial elements, the next logical step is to determine how to operationalize that concept within the US Army. To this end, the Army should adapt British regimental elements which would promote stability at the division level, implement Divisional Recruiting Teams and adopt more varied terms of service. This would entail reducing or eliminating regular Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves, guaranteeing service with a soldier's chosen division, actively developing unit culture, and offering terms of service which match the diverse desires of an expanded recruiting pool. By assigning soldiers to service with a home division, the Army would reap benefits in recruiting, retention, institutional knowledge, and esprit de corps.

The home division system concept provides agency to individuals being recruited and broadens the appeal of service to under-recruited demographics. Recruits could choose a unit which had personal meaning for them, or a geographic location that fits their life choices. This would appeal to Gen Z members, whose top five career priorities include stable career path, ability to make a meaningful impact through my work, and work-life balance.[1] Though a focus on recruiting from a geographic region might seem dated, the stability of guaranteed service with the unit of their choosing nests well with Gen Z's desire for stability. These satisfied soldiers themselves would be an untapped resource for recruiting.

Along with a home division concept, the Army should adopt Divisional Recruiting Teams as an alternative means to reach recruits. Similar to regimental recruiting in the British Army, divisions would use these teams to recruit directly. Selected Soldiers from each division would undergo psychological vetting and training then travel the divisional recruiting territory. These recruiting teams would be supported by their fellow soldiers in fostering community engagement through skills workshops, demonstrations, and augmentation of local Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps or civic programs. Soldiers hailing from areas which are consistently under-recruited could provide hometown connections for divisional recruiters—networking with local contacts and sharing local knowledge. This approach would help the Army achieve the regional targeting which its national campaign currently lacks.

The home division concept also supports retention through inherent stability. Indeed, three of the top five reasons that soldiers leave service are impacts to significant other's career, unpredictability of Army life, and the detrimental effect of Army life on family well-being. Retaining current soldiers would have immediate benefits and require few, if any, modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) changes. Stability and predictability are the highest-valued job attributes on the Department of the Army Career Engagement Survey (DACES) and surveys of Gen Z job seekers. With no regular PCS cycle, soldiers would not spend three months every three years ramping up to PCS, taking PCS leave, then integrating and learning a new job before becoming effective. Ideally, soldier leave would be distributed more evenly over the individual's time of service, offering better stress mitigation than a large PCS block. Even if this were not the case, productivity gained from time alone amounts to an 8-percent increase in soldier availability to the unit over a given three-year period. In return, the Army could ask recruits to commit to a longer term of service or require them to serve in the drilling Reserve after discharge from Active Duty.

Enlistees who desire more flexibility could pursue two, three, or four-year contracts during which they might PCS to meet the needs of the Army. Conversely, recruits who adopt a regiment of choice might carry a longer Active Duty Service Obligation. For instance, a prospective recruit who wanted to enlist in the 101st where a parent served might commit to a six, or even eight-year enlistment contract to guarantee stability with that division. This stability allows soldiers to invest in their unit and in themselves. This flexibility could also extend to what happens after a term of service.

The Cardwell Era practice of requiring Reserve service after Active Duty bears consideration here. The Army should not fight to maintain an end-strength which is unsustainable in the face of current labor market realities. Instead, it should follow a more flexible path. Re-adopting the roundout brigade concept would provide needed combat power for full large-scale combat operation (LSCO) mobilization while reducing personnel costs and applying the savings to fund modernization. Additionally, modifying personnel policies to allow more flexible movement between components would help the Army conform better to the missions it is assigned. For example, some terms of enlistment might require service in the drilling Reserve for a period after discharge from Active Duty. This would help ensure these units would be well staffed with qualified soldiers

of recent experience. Given the enhanced stability of the home division concept, many of these soldiers likely would stay in the geographic vicinity of their Reserve brigade, preserving region-specific and technical institutional knowledge.

Soldiers who stayed with the same unit for most of their career would possess deep institutional knowledge of their profession, their mission, and their unit culture. As the Army moves away from the modular brigade concept, regional alignment of forces likely will increase, increasing the importance of institutional knowledge specific to the alignment.[2] In stark contrast, the current system of regular PCS moves often requires soldiers to re-invent the wheel as institutional knowledge is lost.[3] Under the British system, US soldiers who trained with British regiments before D-Day noted that much of the British training was overseen by professional, knowledgeable sergeants who earned the respect of enlisted and officers alike.[4] Instead, the US Army currently uses a non-deployable civilian workforce and expensive contractors to fill gaps in capabilities and institutional knowledge, while largely treating soldiers like interchangeable parts.[5]

The current US military emphasizes interchangeability, individual cross training, and a "light-heavy imperative." Under this imperative, first initiated in 2000, commanders in both mechanized and light formations must promote core skills and culture for all infantry.[6] In practice, infantrymen are often rotated through various types of unit (light, airborne, air assault, ranger, and mechanized) without gaining a solid grasp of the skills required in each job. This shortcoming is more obvious as weapons systems and battlefield challenges become more complex. While maximum interchangeability may have been the right choice for the modular brigade concept in counterinsurgency, the same does not hold true today. Instead, the complex LSCO battlefield requires both expertise and practiced cohesion, elements which require stability to develop.

Regular PCS also constrains leaders. Under the current system of two-year commands, leaders often have difficulty influencing change. Newly arrived leaders have little time to orient themselves before their new unit deploys—and little time after a deployment to identify issues and implement change before the next PCS. Indeed, most leaders see only one iteration with a unit, which limits the scope of data at their disposal to determine what, if anything, needs to change. Thus, they are only able to have a modest, impermanent, impact at each duty station. Often, they initiate new programs and are unable to sustain them or follow through before their next PCS. Creating a core of long-service home-division soldiers

would offer a unique opportunity for sustained longitudinal improvement, rather than lurches from one initiative to another as leaders PCS in and out.

Conversely, the current system encourages leaders to make their mark by adopting quantifiable changes which can be encapsulated in a bullet on their evaluations. Since this is difficult to do in a short amount of time, they arrive in a position with changes in mind that do not match the unit's organizational culture. This can result in leader-induced stresses as units wobble from one initiative to another, suffering drastic priority shifts. These shifting priorities have two deleterious effects. First, they reduce predictability and introduce ambiguity for soldiers, which increases stress and reduces unit effectiveness. Second, they often drive a shortened decision-making horizon. Shifting priorities and short-term leadership provide incentives to achieve short-term performance goals. While this approach creates urgency, and can even generate short-term wins, such changes are rarely instituted at the cultural level.

If the home division concept were adopted, it would create a system in which leaders often promote from within their own division. This cultural continuity would allow them to understand and better harness the power of their unique unit culture. Meanwhile, broadening assignments allows crosspollination of best practices and lessons learned across divisions by leaders with the cultural agency and longevity to sustain change. Similarly, long-serving soldiers, aside from their institutional knowledge, are also bearers of unit culture. This culture supports rapid indoctrination of new soldiers, establishing norms and common understanding early. This direct transmission of culture reduces ambiguity for junior soldiers, sets expectations, and provides a historical context for the unit. Predictability and lack of ambiguity will allow soldiers to train to maximum proficiency in their tasks instead of working to meet shifting priorities.

A unit with less personnel churn and highly proficient soldiers provides fertile ground for higher-level training. Soldiers who are not constantly rotating out to PCS will be able to maintain and perfect warrior skills required for their jobs. As soldiers gain and maintain mastery of basic skills, platoons could maintain a higher state of training readiness with fewer individual training events. With baseline proficiency more easily maintained, higher echelons of collective training would become available more regularly. Increased collective training at the brigade and division levels would prepare the Army to meet the complex demands of a LSCO conflict. Stability and predictability are the key to unlocking higher levels of training.

Indeed, geographic stability also improves family stability.[7] With no or infrequent PCS moves, units would have a longer planning horizon. Soldiers can save money and build wealth by taking advantage of Veterans Affairs loans to purchase homes. They can be more active in the communities in which they live, spreading knowledge of the military and making a positive impact. In fact, PCS moves rose to become a top five issue for Active-Duty family respondents in 2021.[8] Equally important, families would not be uprooted regularly, allowing spouses to pursue careers and children to maintain their friend groups. This would not, of course, end the stresses of deployments; however, geographic stability would help reduce deployment-related stress through community support, spouse employment, and college-level education.[9]

Finally, reducing the number of PCS moves would result in immediate and recurring cost savings. PCS moves cost the Department of Defense $4 billion in 2014; though the Pentagon has not kept consistent data on costs, they have continued to rise in the intervening eight years.[10] The Army alone projected expenses of $1.7 billion for PCS moves in 2020.[11] If even a quarter of soldiers took advantage of the home division program, the Army would save hundreds of millions of dollars that could be re-directed to priority programs.

Adopting the home division concept would operationalize a regimental system at the division level. This would improve recruiting by matching Gen Z priorities, adding unit culture as an independent variable for recruiting, and opening an alternative pathway for recruiting through divisional recruiting teams. Retention would be similarly improved through more varied career choice, predictability, and family stability. Units would benefit from increased soldier readiness, training, institutional knowledge, and a thriving unit culture. Finally, benefits such as family well-being promote trust and improve soldier performance. All of the above would create a net cost savings with reduced PCS move expenses and human resources management requirements. In implementing the home division concept, the Army would put "people first," front and center, while enhancing readiness.

Home Divisions: Big Wins without Big Costs

To implement this type of home division model, the Army would need to identify the specific organizations affected, ensure supporting documentation is in place, and involve affected organizations in planning. It would be essential to generate stakeholder buy-in to control the turbulence inherent in change, avoid "instant un-readiness," and maintain warfighting

focus. Unlike other potential organizational and policy changes, the home division concept does not have significant immediate impacts in many of these areas. The organizational structure stays largely the same; only the process of manning it changes.

The ideal interim solution would be to implement a pilot at three test-bed divisions. To examine differences between highly sought-after divisions and less-popular divisions, Assignment Interactive Module (AIM) performance ranking data could be mined to identify a highly preferenced division, a moderately preferenced division, and a rarely preferenced division. The period of study should be not less than the maximum enlistment contract for home divisions (six or eight years) and ideally would be double or triple that time to evaluate for retention. This longitudinal analysis would generate recruitment and retention data across all three divisions to provide quantitative evidence for success or failure. Additionally, the budget savings achieved from reduced PCS moves could easily offset the cost of studying this concept. During this trial period, the Army could evaluate the home division system on its merits while experiencing minimal impact to organization, increased readiness due to fewer replacement train-ups, and a net cost savings due to reduced PCS costs.

This proposal entails minimal impacts to operations, funding, sustaining, training, equipping, and structuring. The most significant impacts would be in manning and readiness during the initial rollout of the proposal. Manning under this system, for instance, limits when and where soldiers can be moved. Directive action from the human resources command level and G1 to cross-level manning would be more difficult under this system, as recruits brought into a home division would have a contractual right to stay there for their term of service. Conversely, however, this pilot would enable improved personnel management internal to the division, and a reduced national personnel management footprint. Aside from cost savings, this would create a more self-sufficient, expeditionary force.

With soldiers free to choose a home division, there will be concerns that less-desirable divisions will not be able to achieve the manning levels necessary to operate and maintain readiness. Piloting this program will mitigate such Army-wide issues; however, some incentive programs may be needed in the long term to encourage soldiers to choose less desirable locations. The Army is already experiencing this with the AIM system, which has incorporated soldier and unit preferences at a level never before seen. Several incentive programs have been implemented which would be just as appropriate to the home division system. Brevet promotions have been implemented with 225 key positions across the Army.[12] The

Army also introduced assignment incentive pay bonuses—up-front lump sum payments for less-desirable assignments and additional incentives for extending in those assignments.[13] These are natural extensions of moving toward civilian talent management best practices and would be effective incentives for less-desirable home divisions.

Unit Culture as a Readiness Force Multiplier

Concern for "instant un-readiness" is paramount in implementing far-reaching organizational and policy changes. In the case of the home division program, it is hard to see how the proposed changes could reduce readiness. Soldiers already with the unit would be allowed to remain there, preserving institutional knowledge and promoting retention. Soldiers enlisting to a home division would have much longer terms and spend that time learning their profession with their chosen unit. If this approach was implemented Army-wide, less-competitive units might have reduced readiness.

There are several ways in which this might be mitigated. First, the boost to retention would ensure soldiers stay on longer, offsetting the draw of higher-preferenced units. Second, top-tier units would inevitably fill with top-tier talent. In that case, talented recruits would have to choose a different unit in which to enlist, or a shorter term—hoping to sign on with their division of choice as a reenlistment agreement. Finally, as discussed above, an incentive system would play a part. Such incentives, however, might be temporary because a home division system would allow units to compete on their heritage, unit culture, and quality of life as independently desirable characteristics.

Possible Alternatives for Future Research

The current US Army recruiting crisis will require a multifactorial solution. In approaching this solution through the comprehensive Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) lens, there are many approaches other than those discussed here. From a doctrinal standpoint, the Army could explore ways to expand competition below the level of war and improve deterrence. This would enable a smaller standing Army but would require the United States to move from the One War Plus concept of worldwide force projection, to a more manageable One War capability. Although a smaller Active Army would address the recruiting shortfall, this approach would require direction from Congress and the Executive Branch as it would affect national strategic goals and capabilities.

Organizationally, the US Army should develop soldier evaluation methods that help retain regional and technical experts, as well as generalists and leaders. It could evaluate streamlining the force, focusing Active Duty recruiting on combat arms and shifting non-combat roles to the civilian workforce. This would allow current recruiting to focus on roles that only a soldier can perform. Recruiting of Department of Defense civilians currently faces a similar strong labor market and political headwinds on hiring.[14] Similarly, the US Army could return to the roundout brigade concept and reduce its Active force. This would require significant improvements in the flexibility of transfers between components, and a framework for quickly transitioning units between Active and Reserve status.

Materiel solutions to a recruiting crisis might seem inappropriate; however, this area shows significant promise. Software tools, automation, and artificial intelligence could help reduce person-hours required in jobs related to data input and analysis, lowering the manning requirement for those fields. The Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army online human resources solution, for instance, could be fully realized to reduce the workload requirement for the S1 and G1 shops, as well as the civilian human resources field.

Conclusion

The US Army should embrace a home division concept, build divisional recruiting teams, and adopt more varied options for service. In the final analysis, satisfied, purpose-driven soldiers are the best advertisement. The Army should offer flexibility for soldiers and stability for their families. With basic needs met, soldiers would provide a strong alternate pathway for recruiting to demographics that the Army fails to reach today.

Stability will allow soldiers to engage with their local communities, while divisional recruiting will incentivize relationship-building with communities which are typically under-recruited. Simultaneously, the secondary benefits of increased predictability will engender strong feelings of loyalty in those leaving service, increasing the likelihood that they will encourage others in their communities and families to serve. Those who were satisfied with their time on Active Duty will also be more likely to serve in the National Guard or Reserves.

Today's Army exists outside the public it serves in many ways. It is employed without affecting the lives of most Americans. Soldiers and officers have few community connections and move often. They are encouraged not to show their Army affiliation off-duty. Further, gates and walls

discourage civilians who live nearby from entering an Army installation. Only 25 percent of those who serve in the Army go on to serve their communities in the National Guard, while in the Reserves that number rises to only 35 percent.[15] The US Army remains apart from the citizens it protects.

Stability, continuity, and community connection allowed the post-Cardwell British Regimental System to build and transmit a strong culture. More than that, it brought that culture into the public consciousness in a way that built knowledge and trust. The United States, by contrast, remains divided in its conception of the army. One conception is Huntingtonian, aloof and separate. This army stands vigil and preserves national interests, rarely impinging on the national consciousness. This army resembles the British regimental pride of the era before Cardwell in which they themselves fought for foreign powers under Gustavus Adolphus and Maurice of Nassau, a lineage which the Royal Kent Regiment (The Buffs) holds to this day.[16] This willingness to risk life far abroad for limited goals outside an existential national threat suits the Huntingtonian Army. It recruits from those who have few other choices and draws in soldiers who see opportunity rather than service. This system may seem more appropriate to preservation of US national interests, but it also disconnects the army from those it serves. While this army might currently enjoy broad public support, that support is superficial and does not derive from a willingness to serve. The army's pool of recruits fluctuates drastically with economic conditions and the majority of those who leave do not serve in the Reserve. Consequently, this army drifts further and further from the people it protects.

The second is the Army of Cincinnatus for which the Huntingtonian Army served as mere leavening, enabling its creation but not surviving it. This army does not require the people to know, trust, and identify with it, because it is an army in waiting. It is called forth only when, in extremis, the nation calls on every citizen to do their duty. The exemplar in our case is the New Armies and conscripts which succeeded the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). The BEF was obliterated—buying time for the New Armies to form. Then when the conflict descended into bloody attrition, the Army of Cincinnatus—volunteers and conscripts alike—served as a proxy for the moral and economic will to fight.

Huntington and Cincinnatus are two poles of a spectrum of military service. These two conceptions represent, as British statesman Richard Burton Haldane would likely have recognized, a Hegelian dialectic. Thesis and anti-thesis are vying for a balanced synthesis. This synthesis is not

a compromise but a solution, which Hegel viewed as a higher truth.[17] In emulating aspects of the BRS, today's US Army should seek synthesis—not compromise between these two traditions.

Intertwining the lives of satisfied soldiers and veterans into their communities, supported by divisional recruiting efforts, will encourage civic knowledge of the US Army. Being visible in communities across the country will build trust in the only reliable way, through daily interaction. Knowing those who have served and thus building trust, a growing percentage of Americans will be able to see an identity for themselves which includes service in the US Army.

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Appendix A
Primer on the British Regimental System

The British Regimental System might best be considered to have been grown organically rather than created from whole cloth. Its origins were in that nation's Civil War from 1645 to 1660, during which Oliver Cromwell created the New Model Army and under it the regimental system.[1] Some regiments, however, pre-dated the Civil War and subsequent restoration. The Royal Scots, for instance, were formed under warrant from Charles I in 1633 and placed in French service until 1678.[2] The Scots Guards were formed in 1642 under King Charles I and designated as personal guards to King Charles II in exile during the English Civil War.[3] Even older are the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), which trace their origins to Thomas Morgan's Company of Foot formed in 1572 to serve in the Eighty Years' War.[4] These early formations demonstrate the prototypes available to Cromwell in developing the New Model Army. Indeed, both Cromwell and his future Civil War opponents fought in similar formations during the Dutch wars between 1625 and 1637.[5]

Subsequent to the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the New Model Army was disbanded because Charles II was reluctant to rely on a standing army which had previously served parliament over the monarchy.[6] Some structures such as the regimental structure were retained, though reoriented on the French model of *Maison du Roi* (French: Royal Household Guard) toward the protection of royal power.[7] Some units were even retained wholesale from the New Model Army such as Monk's Regiment of Foot, which was accepted into service by Charles II and eventually became today's Coldstream Guards. That said, there were longstanding exceptions like the restoration army in Ireland, which was loosely organized and not even regimented until 1672.[8]

Under Charles II, the restoration Army grew from an initial 5,000 soldiers in four regiments of foot and three of horse to 16,000 soldiers in eight regiments of foot and four of horse by the end of his reign.[9] His successor, James II, later expanded this to 30,000 soldiers with the addition of eleven regiments of foot and eight of horse.[10] The maintenance of a standing army presaged future British expansion into Gibraltar, Tangiers, and farther abroad. This effort required an ever-increasing standing army, though conscription remained a politically unpalatable option. Cromwell's conscript army of occupation had left a lasting unfavorable impression with the British people.[11]

Under this system, unit recruiting, equipping, and fielding was the responsibility of individual aristocrats as colonel of a regiment. Parliament and the monarchy disbursed funds to the colonel to raise, train, and supply the regiment. This was modified somewhat by Burke's Act of 1783, which brought aspects of recruiting and finance under government control.[12] As late as 1881, however, regimental colonels were allowed and even expected to make a personal profit from their role.[13] These 17th century nobles were directed by the monarchy and Parliament to recruit forces; under unique banners emerged unique uniforms and traditions, organized into foot and horse regiments.[14] These regiments under the restoration army remained the property of their colonels but developed their own unique traditions.[15] Through their distinctive badges, colors, mascots, marches, and anniversaries, these volunteer units touted their battle honors, royal sponsorship, and territorial affiliation to recruit and retain soldiers. In fact, as these regiments fought and earned honors, there was a notable transition from recorded feats of individual heroism toward regimental accomplishment.[16] The effects of this pride of place on regiment recruiting, however, is debatable.

Recruiting practices during this era may bear further explanation. While many officers were aristocratic, the rank and file were often drawn from the unemployed or downright criminal, and service was essentially for life (or until medically discharged).[17] For example, the Recruitment Act of 1703 allowed the government to draft all unemployed men, and the government often paid parish priests a bounty to point them out.[18] Meanwhile, the Mutiny Act of 1702 offered a pardon to all felons who chose to enlist.[19] Further, Impressment acts in 1778 and 1779 impressed citizens into the military for minor infractions such as being drunk and disorderly. One example was Sergeant Kite, protagonist of *The Recruiting Officer*. The 1706 play, which is still produced often in England today, follows Sergeant Kite, the noncommissioned officer of titular recruiting officer Captain Plume, who cynically deceives his rural recruits with tales of money and comfort while muddling their heads with drink.[20] In 1858, J. R. Godley, assistant undersecretary of state for war, railed against continued recruiting in taverns as a clear public image problem facing Army recruitment.[21] So pernicious was this recruiting behavior that as late as 1872, military journals continued to raise concern over the Army's Sergeant Kites.[22]

At the outset of the Napoleonic wars, the Army had grown to encompass branches of Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, and Logistics and numbered 40,000 regulars and 50,000 reserves.[23] Each of these branches contained a number of regiments with traditions and uniforms—some developed over

Figure A.1. Sketch of British recruiting officer.

Source: National Army Museum, "Recruits, 1780," NAM 1975-08-56-1, National Army Museum Study Collection, accessed 28 December 2022, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1975-08-58-1.

more than 150 years. In 1751, the numbering by seniority of these regiments was finalized by royal warrant, offering pride of place to the most senior.[24] In the years leading up to 1782, many of these regiments adopted a local place name as part of their titles to increase recruiting during the War for American Independence; this was largely nominal, however, be-

cause recruits could enlist to any unit.[25] Regiments of this era remained largely administrative units rather than the tactical formations that continued to operate at the battalion level.[26]

Waterloo through Crimea: Inter-War Stagnation

With successful conclusion of the Napoleonic wars, the British Military and the Army, in particular, entered a period of stagnation.[27] This could be attributed in part to the increased focus on the navy as the primary tool of military power; however, this was not the only force at work. A general retrenchment from continental interference was at play which would last until the 1853 Crimean War. The ossification of the Wellingtonian System of Army organization left colonels of regiment with a great deal of power and resulted in an uneven character of regiments based on the ideas and focus of their colonel.[28]

Under these conditions, the Army languished for lack of resources and political will. The Army budget, for instance, decreased by more than 71 percent between 1815 and 1836.[29] In the British Army from 1815 to 1853, the driving force was colonial defense, not large-scale continental war.[30] During this period, the Army oriented more and more toward small wars and expeditions against technologically inferior opponents. This can be seen in the Afghan expeditions, Sikh wars, Burmese War of 1852, and punitive expeditions against China in 1857 and 1860. At the same time, the Army was being tasked with these actions during historic manpower lows. The Army had been reduced from its 1815 high of approximately 234,000 to 88,000 in 1838.[31]

From the perspective of the potential recruit of the time, these pressures presented several problems. First, economic pressures often prevented meaningful reform, even at the level of basic living standards. This was due largely to a parliamentary perception that any reform would impose additional costs. Second, the long overseas service entailed by colonial defense was largely borne by line regiments, making recruiting more difficult for these formations. Guards regiments and Cavalry regiments remained in Britain, while Artillery and Engineers were employed on a shorter term basis in small detached units, as needed.[32] For instance, of the 112 Infantry regiments available to Britain in 1846, only 35 remained in Britain; the rest garrisoned the empire. Finally, regiments stationed overseas could expect to remain there for ten to twelve years and in some cases as long as twenty. Often officers of means would transfer out of the regiment just prior to these deployments, preferring to remain at home with a different regiment.[33] This policy was somewhat intentional, as it both reduced costs

and hid the army abroad away from the view of the British public, which protected it in times of fiscal retrenchment.[34]

Amid these conditions, the Army failed to recruit the necessary soldiers to support its empire. Without a national service requirement, the Army had to seek voluntary recruits; but given the rigors of service and poor compensation, there were few interested parties. Even those who remained unemployed did not desire military service, which entailed poor living conditions, disease, arbitrary draconian justice, and little in the way of support since soldiers did not receive a pension. Thus, the Army continued to seek out and recruit enlisted soldiers who met a bare minimum physical fitness and height requirement—without regard for education, sobriety, or past offenses.[35] In the face of these prevailing conditions, two lines of effort emerged which attempted to reform the Army: a humanitarian line promoted among civilians and an efficiency movement among a small but vocal group of officers.

The first effort which began to gain traction in the 1830s was to improve soldier living conditions and, therefore, health.[36] The concept was that better health would improve retention and soldier effectiveness, reduce required recruiting numbers, and increase the appeal of Army life. Conditions in Army life were often squalid. Sleeping spaces that were just twenty-three inches in breadth were common in the West Indies until 1827. At home, the St. Mary's casemates sustained a population of 1,410 soldiers in a space designed for 600. Under these conditions, soldiers were allotted only 200 to 300 cubic feet of personal space compared to the 600 cubic feet required in prisons at that time.[37] A 1828 Sanitary Commission found that compared to a civilian mortality rate of 10.7/1,000, the Army had a rate of 15/1,000 at home and 57/1,000 overseas, even during peacetime.[38] Lord Howick (3rd Earl Grey), secretary of war and later colonial secretary, championed many of these reforms from the 1830s onward. He implemented regimental savings banks, post libraries, exercise yards, and more nutritious rations despite stiff resistance from the treasury and Parliament.[39] These reforms did not significantly impact recruiting, and retention at this time was of little concern due to the long service contracts which remained at twenty-one years until 1846.

The second reform movement was to take advantage of newer technologies such as steam power to enable more frequent rotation of regiments to colonial duty. The core idea was that transportation technology advances would allow recruits to be rotated more easily between the home islands and the colonies—reducing the number of years each unit would

spend in colonies with higher mortality rates, such as the West Indies. There was an idea of acclimatization behind this movement as well, moving to progressively more environmentally hostile postings until returning at the end of the tour. This initiative met with little success in the parsimonious atmosphere of the time. The increased rotation would require increased recruiting and expense or a decrease in overall colonial commitments, neither of which appeared feasible in the 1830s and early 1840s.[40]

Essentially the only successful British Army reforms between Waterloo and the Crimean War were modest improvements in health and education, introduction of small monetary rewards for meritorious service, reduction in flogging, and reduction in terms of service. All these initiatives reflected the changing social morays of Victorian England during the period under study. Floggings, often conducted publicly, were a visible deterrent to Army service, but their eventual removal was the result of social pressure rather than Army policy. Political reformers began to acknowledge that enlisted soldier drunkenness and misbehavior was in part due to the strictness and monotony of Army life. This manifested itself in a cycle of misbehavior, strict (often corporal) punishment, and a soldier seeking refuge in drink.[41] For instance, the first limitation on flogging was enacted in 1829, reducing the maximum sentence to a paltry 500 lashes.[42] As one of the few military issues to gain traction with Parliament, this punishment went through sequential reductions until by 1846 the maximum allowed sentence was fifty lashes.[43]

Incentives for good behavior were also introduced, including good conduct pay and education. The 1845 Meritorious Service Bill added 1 penny to every soldier's daily salary, for every five years of meritorious service, a boon for soldiers whose base pay did not increase at all from 1797 to 1867.[44] Regimental schools and libraries had previously been introduced by one regiment or another but were subject to the support of the colonel. In 1846, Army-wide regimental schools were introduced, and standards and pay increased for schoolmasters. These reforms were overseen by Chaplain General George Robert Glieg who, turning a previously honorary title into a practical one, required teacher qualification and centralized the curriculum.[45] Despite resistance from conservative officers, who felt there was no need to educate the rank and file, the Army eventually embraced this system and even introduced education certificate requirements by rank in 1861. Even the canteen system was brought under regimental control in 1863, to curtail drunkenness and prevent private contractors from taking advantage of soldiers.[46]

The final reform and most relevant to this book was the introduction of the Limited Service Bill in 1846 and its revised counterpart in 1847. The bill was intended to improve recruit quality, increase the attractiveness of service, and discharge old soldiers with bad habits. The revised bill dropped the term of military service from twenty-one years to ten (twelve for Cavalry). It also allowed currently serving soldiers with more than ten years in the Army to leave service.[47] Only the soldier completing the full twenty-one years of service (in two terms or one) would be eligible for a pension on retirement of six British pence per day (roughly US$3). The bill offered mixed results. There was no mass exodus of serving soldiers and the shorter term was popular, but the shorter service combined with the population exodus from Ireland during the famine of 1846 would affect recruiting decades later.[48]

Crimea and the Sepoy Revolt: Movement toward Change

The close succession of the Crimean War from 1854 to 1856 and the Sepoy Revolt of 1857 in India challenged the British Army's previous decades of stagnation. After conducting only police actions and small wars against inferior opponents, the Army was called on in 1854 to again wage continental war. The result was the employment of inexperienced regiments, poor logistics, and minimal medical care with predictable consequences.[49] What had not been predicted was the key role that news correspondents would play in raising public awareness of the conflict.[50] The media blamed basic supply shortages, cholera, exposure, and poor conditions in field hospital on a neglectful Army high command.[51]

With public outrage came parliamentary interest in the form of the Roebuck Committee, which determined that transport, provision, intelligence, and hospital care were grossly inadequate.[52] Despite these formidable obstacles, the regiments themselves fought well at Balaclava and elsewhere, even when their leadership failed as in the infamous charge of the Light Brigade. The war concluded successfully despite the issues; however, concerns over the Army bureaucratic failures in Crimea quickly faded with trouble on the horizon in India. As a result, no lasting reforms were made.

The Indian Revolt in May 1857 began in Meerut following the imprisonment of a local Sepoy soldier for refusing to use cartridges greased with pork fat.[53] The violence spread to Delhi and from there to the rest of India, reaching East India Company and British troops in their cantonments as local regiments mutinied. Of 277,000 British and East India Company soldiers in country at the time, only 45,000 were European and

were quickly overwhelmed, unable to do more than hold in place for relief.[54] Coming so close on the heels of the Crimean War, Britain now had to commit additional regiments to quell the uprising over the course of fourteen months of hard fighting. Even when victorious, the necessity to garrison India strained British forces, and the requirement to maintain a 1:2 ratio of British to Indian troops persisted until 1914.[55] This was further compounded by the 1858 decision to transfer India from the East India Company to the Crown and disband East India Company forces, imposing a requirement to maintain 60,000 British regulars in India at all times.[56]

Summary

By 1861, the British regular army's size had grown to approximately 220,000 Active Duty soldiers. These were divided into 31 Cavalry regiments and 113 Infantry regiments (ranging from one to four battalions). These were supplemented by two corps regiments as well as Logistics and Artillery regiments.[57] Recruits during this time could expect to serve with the same regiment in which they enlisted for their entire career.[58] This did not necessarily entail significant control over their lives and career since battalions within the same regiment rarely served together, but it provided one element that soldiers could depend on—their regiment.[59]

The British Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries grew to encompass territories in Africa, North America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Australia, Asia, and the Indian Sub-Continent. While soldiers might remain with the same regiment, that regiment might be stationed in any one of these far-flung territories for years at a time.[60] Despite this, or perhaps because of it, a regimental culture had developed. Service became less harsh and monotonous and was no longer a life sentence. Reforms to military life began to mirror ongoing changes in British society. To similarly broaden its pool of recruits who can see themselves in military service (the identity gap), today's US Army will need to remain adaptable. This adaptability will require understanding of societal trends, changing values, and what is possible in a given labor market. The Army's return to the "Be All You Can Be" recruiting concept on the fiftieth anniversary of the all-volunteer force shows that senior leadership has taken this to heart.[61] This book analyzes the case of a professional western army facing similar constraints and cultural shifts—and offers lessons to help improve today's Army recruiting, retention, and reconstitution efforts.

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Appendix B
Regimental System Faces a Hostile Recruiting Environment during the Interwar Period, 1919–39

As can be seen in recruiting posters of the day, units which served in the Great War proudly highlighted their battle honors and Victoria Cross awardees. Indeed, the Army's responsibilities did not end with the signing of the Armistice. Conscription was re-enacted from 1919 to 1920 to enable Britain to occupy the Rhineland, garrison the middle east, quell unrest in Ireland, defend its colonies, and even participate in a bit of military adventurism on behalf of the White Forces in Russia.[1] Despite this pride, the wartime Army of 3.6 million demobilized as Britain viewed this period as an opportunity to disarm, disband, and enjoy a hard-fought peace. By 1921, only 217,477 remained in Active Service.[2] In the tradition of many armies transitioning to a garrison environment, the British Army refocused on the familiar, traditional trappings of service such as drill, musketry, and marching.[3] Military historian John Laffin epitomized the developing mindset: "If it moves, salute it. If it doesn't move, pick it up; if you can't pick it up, paint it."[4] This is a mentality manifestly familiar in the current US Army as its Global War on Terror commitments wind down.

Figure B.1. North Lancashire Fusiliers Recruiting Poster, 1921.

Source: National Army Museum, "The Loyal Regt. (North Lancashire)," NAM. 1983-05-30-1, 1921, National Army Museum Study Collection.

Economic pressure soon surfaced as well and Britain sought a peace dividend like the United States required following the end of the Cold War. In 1921, British politician Sir Eric Geddes led a committee on national expenditure which would eventually reduce the size of the Army by 50,000 and force difficult resource allocation decisions.[5] The small, poorly funded British Army now had to incorporate a tank arm, signal corps, and machine gun corps while competing with the entrenched Royal Navy and a novel (and expensive) Royal Air Force.[6] In this battle for funding, the Army largely lost out to the Air Force as more modern technology and a national movement to avoid continental commitments led British leaders to view the Army again as primarily defensive and colonial in nature. Into this milieu, civilian leaders injected the ten-year rule—assuming that no major war would occur for the next ten years. This rule held sway until 1932 when increasing continental tensions forced revision to a five-year rule.[7] Here it seems impossible not to draw parallel to the US Army's own Hollow Divisions of the post-Vietnam Era. These forces appeared on paper to be ready and functional; however, close scrutiny revealed manning and equipment shortages which rendered them unfit for wartime service.

Figure B.2. Lancashire Fusiliers Recruiting Poster, 1920.

Source: National Army Museum, "Join the Lancashire Fusiliers," NAM. 1983-11-109-1, 1920, National Army Museum Study Collection.

Indeed, public sentiment had turned against the British Army in a very similar fashion, though perhaps more in indifference than outright

censure. The Army returned to its role as a colonial police force and once again had difficulty finding recruits as revulsion against the war became widespread.[8] One soldier described colonial monotony as "between the barrack room and the canteen without any social life at all."[9] Social and geographic isolation were a fact of life for British Regiment soldiers. Battalions headed for India could expect to remain there for twelve years or more with paid home leave granted every six years. Pay was also stagnant and would not increase at all between 1925 and 1937, and promotions languished with some subalterns serving in the same rank for fifteen years or more.[10] By 1932 after a decade of economic retrenchment, the Army had reached a nadir of 207,000 soldiers.[11] By this point, Army recruiting had disappeared from national-level discussions. An extensive archival search did not return any national level concern over army recruiting until the March 1936 revival of the "Recruiting for the Army" cabinet memoranda.[12] These conditions, and their root in British culture, are embodied by military historian John Fortescue, who wrote in 1899: "The memory of their (Cromwell's) dictatorship burned itself into the heart of the nation; even now after two centuries and a half, the vengeance of the nation on the soldier remains insatiate and insatiable."[13] The profession of arms was once again suspect in the eyes of the British people.

In this environment, which some might argue is an inevitable cycle of public opinion after war, regimental recruiting teams again displayed adaptability and persistence in meeting their goals. Continuing to highlight their wartime accomplishments, they reoriented to attract soldiers based on lifestyle, education, adventure, and sport. Typical of this lifestyle recruiting, a 1925 Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers poster features images of sport and the sphinx (travel), while modestly displaying battle honors and its motto *nec aspera terrent* (French: fear no difficulties) in a much smaller font. Still others like the South Wales Borderers emphasized pay, one-month leave, and free quarters and uniforms. In addition to these blandishments, the posters promoted the unit's position as Army Rugby Cup champions for four years running. All the while, recruiting posters continued to display battle honors, though less prominently. Other regiments such as the South Lancashire Regiment emphasized connections to royal figures, identity with the community ("Your Own Regiment"), and flexible service in either regular or territorial branches of the Army. These unique recruiting strategies reflected diverse target populations within Britain and were a significant departure from the "King and Country" strategy seen during the Great War. These diverse inter-war recruiting strategies reflected the unique benefits of alternative recruiting pathways in peacetime.

Figure B.3. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Recruiting Poster, 1925.

Source: National Army Museum, "Join the Corps of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Royal Irish Fusiliers," NAM. 1983-11-114-1, 1925, National Army Museum Study Collection.

Figure B.4. South Wales Borderers Recruiting Poster, 1928.

Source: National Army Museum, "Join the Corps of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Royal Irish Fusiliers," NAM. 1983-11-112-1, 1928, National Army Museum Study Collection.

Figure B.5. South Lancashire Recruiting Poster, 1930.

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Appendix C
Additional Considerations for US Army Implementation

Despite the net negative cost of implementation, changes to US Army recruiting practices will affect other domains as well. Prior to force integration functional analysis, however, the Army must consider potential Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) impacts. Doctrinally, the Army would need to draft, adopt, and operationalize a personnel concept that prioritizes unit affiliation preferences. Although parts of this system have been in place since the 1990 version of Army Regulation 600-82, the United States has never fully adopted the system in the British sense.[1] Adopting it at a division level would require doctrinal recognition of the system and implementation guidance.

Adopting a regimental style system at the division level would also require some modest materiel changes. Though the division's modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) would remain unchanged, the presence of long-timer soldiers who spend most of their career in the same division or even the same brigade would have second-order effects. The increased productivity from eliminating the regular permanent change of station (PCS) cycle, would allow increased time for training and exercises in the long-range training calendar. Increased wear and tear on equipment will require additional parts, and an increased replacement timeline to match the training tempo. It is possible this could be partially mitigated by the increased institutional knowledge gained by maintainers and operators who are long-service professionals in the same unit; however, new lifecycle planning factors would need to be developed for equipment.

Facilities impacts would be significant only if the regimental style system was extended to Reserve and National Guard units and those units were consolidated geographically with Active Duty formations. If this approach were adopted, the Army would need to house and maintain the equipment of these formations. While this may increase costs, there is a benefit in cross-training among components and familiarity between leaders. This component of the regimental-style system would accomplish the intent of the roundout brigades which were fielded in the 1980s, but never employed.

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Appendix D
The Regimental Mess, a Template for Informal Leadership and Soldier Development

The US Army is missing a critical informal venue for leader development culture due to the demise of the Officer and Enlisted Club systems. From a height of more than 100 clubs in the 1970s, Army service clubs have diminished to fewer than five across the entirety of the force.[1] These clubs offered an essential element of prestige and exclusivity to officers and enlisted who were often underpaid compared to the civilian population. More than that, they created a space where service traditions and history were preserved, relationships built, and mentorship conducted. This space, away from the flagpole yet steeped in military tradition, provided a key leader development conduit which is now absent in the US Army culture. This brief discussion will review the Army's mentorship deficit as well as the history of the club system, including its flaws and benefits, and propose how a new system based on the British regimental mess might help revive the service club as a venue for informal mentorship, leader development, and unit culture.

The Army has a leader development problem. The 2016 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL), the latest version of the survey that was publicly available at the time of publication, identified that only 57 percent of Active Duty soldiers are receiving mentorship, a number that has been in a slow but steady decline since first assessed by CASAL.[2] Similarly, the Leads and Develops Others competencies of the Army Leadership Requirements Model are below the desired threshold of 75 percent, presenting a medium chance of mission failure in their own right. Develops Others, in particular, continues to be the absolute lowest rated competency at 61 percent.[3] The same report found that only half of Army leaders take time to discuss how to improve performance or prepare for future assignments, which just one third of the respondents indicating their unit places a high priority on leader development. To add another data point to the picture, readers who have access are encouraged to study the most recent CASAL findings. Given this decline, it might seem that the Army should place more formal emphasis on the process than it does, but that is not the best way to build a culture of mentorship. The 2016 CASAL attributes this variously to lack of emphasis, time, or agreement on the nature of leader development. Based on the available survey results, it might seem that the Army should place more formal em-

phasis on mentorship than it does, but that would not be the best way to build a culture of mentorship.

The Army does not currently doctrinally mandate any formal mentorship processes.[4] Instead, Army Regulation 600-100 and Army Doctrine Publication 6-22 characterize the nature of "informal" mentoring relationships and give guidance on cultivating such relationships.[5] The informal nature of how Army Doctrine treats mentorship is reflective, an understanding that mentorship is most effective when it is voluntary and developed organically. In a 2015 Naval War College Study, for instance, participants indicated that formal compulsory mentorship programs were largely ineffective. Enlisted sailors who participated in the study rated such programs with a mean of 2.33 out of 5; officer responses were slightly better at 2.8, hardly a resounding success.[6] This does not mean that the Army does not support mentorship; the military does actively encourage soldiers to seek out mentors and mentees among those with whom they have a strong relationship.[7] The relationship aspect is key here. Soldiers cannot be expected to capably seek or provide mentorship without a relationship based on mutual respect and affinity. While those foundational qualities may begin to develop in formal work settings, an informal setting such as a service club or mess is where hierarchy can be flattened and affinity cemented into a close mentor-mentee relationship.

Before expounding further on the benefits of informal space for mentorship, however, it is worth touching briefly on the history of the Service Club since the US Army created this structure at the outbreak of WWII. The Army had previously added morale programs such as the Post Exchange (PX) system, recreation centers, and gyms in 1903; these were centralized under the Army Morale Division in 1918. These were further consolidated with the Army Motion Picture Service and Library Service in 1941 to create the Special Services; by 1943, the Special Services had responsibility for all Army morale functions.[8] The Special Services budget grew with equal alacrity from $38,459 in 1939 to more than $42 million by 1945.[9] When the United States entered WWII in December 1941, the Special Service mobilized with the soldiers and became expeditionary. By 1945, Service Clubs were located anywhere large concentrations of soldiers gathered—even in far-flung locations like Manilla and Burma.[10] By war's end with the transition toward an army of occupation, many soldiers and consequently many clubs remained spread around the world and run by Special Services as Officer and Enlisted clubs.

These clubs were not profit-making endeavors, and their programs were subsidized by other functions of the Special Services such as the PX system.[11] Eventually these two components were separated, creating the Army and Air Force Exchange System (AAFES) to run the for-profit PX system and incorporating Service Clubs into the Army Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Command. The clubs thrived through the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, providing benefits and prestige to often poorly paid soldiers. They provided informal social spaces where soldiers could mingle and build close relationships across rank or unit lines. The very informality of the setting, tempered by a sense of place which remained historically and distinctly military, created an environment in which soldiers could develop relationships without any sense of favoritism or impropriety. Leaders attended club functions, related to their subordinates as people, and, in turn, were socially ratified as legitimate beyond mere fiat. This collective social process of constructing leadership identity through contact with followers in informal settings is similarly a product of the regimental mess system in commonwealth armies.[12] Unfortunately, as funding became an increasingly salient issue and as soldier preferences evolved, the club system moved toward obsolescence.

As the 1980s progressed, fewer soldiers were paying dues at the club. Simultaneously, the clubs became increasingly dependent on profitability as congressionally appropriated funds for their operation dwindled.[13] Competition with off-post establishments, as well as base realignments and closings and a general demographic shift toward family services over clubs also contributed. By the time MWR Command was deactivated in 2011 and moved under Installation Management Command, the Army had only seven clubs.[14] Today, the Officer and Enlisted Club System is absent from military life and the memory of most soldiers under the age of 40. Other nations, however, have maintained longstanding traditions of mess and club systems for centuries.

An example worth considering both for its longevity and cultural similarity is the British Regimental Mess System, which also operates in other Commonwealth nations sharing heritage with Britain. Historically, the British Mess System began as a means to feed officers during communal living in colonial and garrison settings, but it subsequently developed into the center of social life among officers of a given regiment.[15] Officers, who were primarily independently wealthy individuals prior to the Great War, sought to lighten the burden of colonial duty by creating a social epi-

center where they could commune.[16] To realize this goal, mess dues were compulsorily collected from all officers.[17] In return, they received meals, wine, and entertainment. Once Regimental Depots were instituted from 1881 onward, regimental mess halls presented an ideal opportunity for development of a sense of place, serving as the repository for a regiment's history and artifacts.[18] The mess found an expanded role in wartime as well, as those with secondary duties in the mess were expected to continue using mess funds in theater to procure morale-boosting delicacies where able.[19] The British Mess System, however, was hierarchical internally and initially excluded enlisted ranks entirely, except in the capacity as personal servants. Indeed, there were often complex and bewildering rules and hierarchies to the mess which hardly made it informal. There were, however, relaxed dress requirements such as removing the belt and sword to demonstrate that officers were off-duty and ease relations among soldiers of different ranks.[20] The greatest overall strength of early incarnations of the British Regimental System was that they created a cultural repository for each regiment and began the move toward a more relaxed and informal off-duty social space.

The current mess system in Britain retains some hierarchy, with separate messes for Officers, Enlisted, and Warrant; other nations such as Australia have more egalitarian practices.[21] One Australian Officer described his country's messes as more than social clubs:

> Military messes contribute to fighting power by acting as a nexus point that enhances unit esprit de corps, cultivates leadership attributes, and fosters a binding military ethos. By performing this role, a mess contributes to the development and strengthening of the moral component of fighting power, which embodies those individual and organizational characteristics that are fundamental to success—morale, integrity, values, and legitimacy.[22]

Thus, the mess serves as a key developmental venue for soldiers, one which the US Army lacks since the demise of the Club System. The mess as an institution has more staying power than the US Army's previous Service Club System because it is at its core a grassroots organization. The Regimental Mess, funded in part by dues from the unit, preserves the regiment's history and traditions and serves as a center for social life in the unit. This differs considerably from the now-defunct US Army Service Club System, which was built to support a world war, survived due to governmental largess, and met its demise when required to turn a profit.

Any attempted revival of the Army Club System would be wise to take this to heart and root itself at the brigade level, leveraging unit identity for support and funding. Despite these differences, the two systems provide an essentially similar function. They create an informal place in which history, materiality, and leadership intersect. As part of this function, they are central to "generating, transmitting, legitimizing, and undoing meanings associated with leadership."[23] It is in this milieu, in an informal egalitarian setting, that leader development through mentorship thrives.

Returning to the Annual Study of Army Leadership, it cannot be overstated that a 59 percent rating for Develops Others is not high enough. The US Army should do better for its soldiers. Simultaneously, the Army faces more tasks with comparatively less time and fewer resources than ever before. There are only so many hours in the day and the Annual Study of Army Leadership shows that in the face of workplace requirements, mentorship is consistently deprioritized. A robust and lively mess system which ensures that discussion of day-to-day work is taboo; therefore, easing socialization up and down rank hierarchy should be the order of the day. This is true outside the confines of the unit as well. Brig. Gen. R. J. Kentish, the inspiring and often comedic first commandant of the British Officer's School at Aldershot during World War 1, wrote about the value of the mess in building relationships further up the rank structure. He encouraged officers to "live well yourself, enjoy your food, and make all your young officers do likewise, and above all else see that you invite your General not once, but frequently."[24] Such an environment is ideal for developing the type of informal mentorship that soldiers view as most effective.[25] It fosters the underlying relationships necessary for leader development by linking it with socialization and intentionally isolating it from day-to-day discussions of specific work tasks. In this way, the mess system enjoyably creates fenced time for mentorship and presents opportunities for senior leader interaction, without imposing added requirements.

In closing, the US Army should return to a service club system along the lines of the British Regimental Mess System. Today's US Army maintains thirty-one brigade combat teams, far fewer than the hundred or more Officer Clubs operated in the 1970s.[26] A brigade-based mess system would cost far less than the club system to operate. This system should place ownership in the hands of the unit in all particulars, with no reliance on Garrison or Installation Management Command. A brigade mess would help propagate unit culture and engage soldiers in the life of cohorts in an enjoyable way. Such a system would offer the optimal combination of in-

group culture, hierarchical flattening, and fenced time to enable genuine and lasting mentorship. Leader development through mentorship in informal and off-duty settings will result in more satisfied soldiers and more credible leaders, and build the next generation of Army leadership in an authentic, organic, and self-sustaining way.

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Appendix E
Executive Summary

Issue: The US Army faces declining recruiting prospects.

- Only 23 percent of Americans aged 17 to 24 are eligible for service without waiver.
- 9 percent of eligible Americans consider military service.
- The 2023 National Defense Authorization Act proposed to shrink the Army by 33,000 soldiers, or 6 percent.

		British Regimental System		
		Strengths Stability/Unit Cohesion Alternate Recruitment Pathway Force Generation/ Reconstitution	**Weaknesses** Parochial/Non-Standard Anti-Intellectual/ Anti-Learning Personnel Inflexibility	
US ARMY	**Strengths** Pay/Benefits Sense of Purpose Corporateness	**Win Big** Reduce or eliminate the PCS requirement will promote development of unit culture, leverage stability for retention, and provide a pool of regionally aligned technical and cultural expertise.	**Risks** Personnel Inflexibility Parochialism/ Nonstandard Anti-Learning	**Mitigation** Incentivize key positions Broaden assignments PME, Lessons Learned
	Weaknesses Lack of Stability Insufficient Manning Poor LSCO Reconstruction/ Generation	**Improve Weakness** Divisions will be incentivized to actively field recruiting teams and engage with the public to recruit for their unit. Increased stability will improve family outcomes, build experienced reserve, ease transitions between components, and ensure most of those discharged share favorable experiences with their communities, broadening the pool of recruits	**Failure** Leader violation of public trust Unit complacency Cohesion hinders incorporation of new soldiers	**Mitigations** Athena, BCAP, CCAP Broadening/ Multi-Unit Training Actively manage culture to match soldiers

Figure E.1. Comparison of US Army and British Regimental System Recruiting.

Source: Created by the author and Army University Press.

Army senior leaders link the recruiting challenges to gaps in knowledge, identity, and trust.

Purpose of this study: Compare the current US Army recruiting crisis to the challenges faced by the British Regimental System in 1868 to 1919.

Methods: Uses single case study methodology described by R. K. Yin; a modified version of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis; then the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities and Policy framework.

Findings: Primary use case for regimental elements is *stability*. In the US Army, this will increase recruiting by growing *knowledge*, building *trust*, and developing a broader recruiting base which can identify with service.

Recommendations: Adopt a home division concept and reduce or eliminate mandatory permanent change of station (PCS).

- Soldiers enlist to a specific division, spend early career there, then return after broadening.
- Reduce or eliminate mandatory PCS.
- Divisional recruiting teams.

Limitations: Requires revision of Army Manning Guidance, makes recruiting more difficult for unpopular units, requires a different approach to talent management (deeper in vice up-or-out).

Implementation: Implement three division pilot programs based on stratified Assignment Interactive Module (AIM) performance ranking.

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